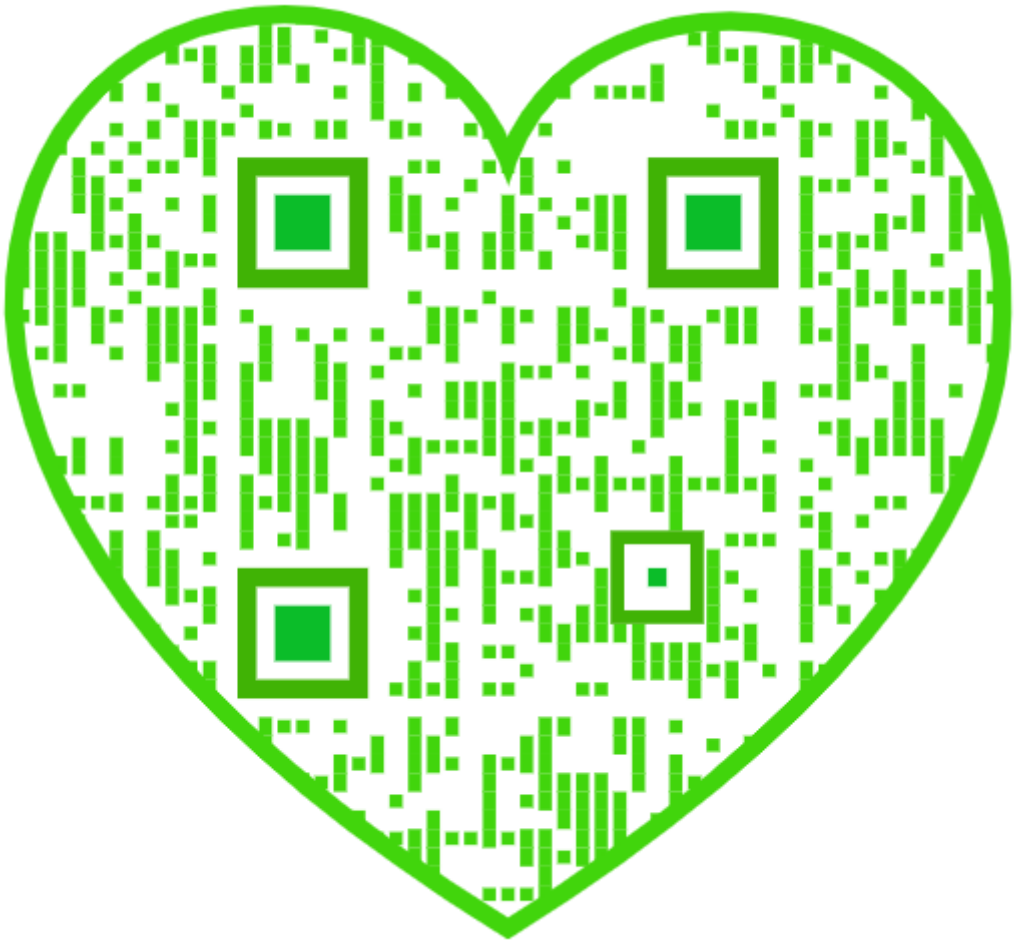

PITMAN'S PRACTICAL JOURNALISM

AN INTRODUCTION TO EVERY DESCRIPTION OF LITERARY EFFORT IN ASSOCIATION WITH NEWSPAPER PRODUCTION

BY

ALFRED BAKER

HON. MEMBER AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF THE INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS (INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER)

WITH NOTES ON

NEWSPAPER LAW

BY

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PREFACE

THE guidance in the practice of English Journalism given in this volume is designed mainly for those who are about to take up newspaper work, or who are already filling junior positions on the Press. It is hoped that many who are beginning their journalistic career may derive advantage from the experience and advice of an old hand.

But the scope of the book is by no means limited to an attempt to initiate the tyro in the work usually entrusted to beginners. The duties of every class of journalist—from the junior reporter to the editor—are in turn described; and information is offered on the work of each member of the newspaper staff, from the lowest to the highest.

While conciseness has been aimed at, the importance of furnishing complete practical guidance has been kept steadily in view. It is hoped, therefore, that the volume may prove serviceable to a large number of newspaper men, in addition to those for whom it is primarily intended. The working journalist will, it is believed, find that much useful matter on newspaper enterprise is contained in this book, which has not been hitherto readily accessible; while the addition of an index renders it easy of consultation on any desired point, either of journalistic practice or of newspaper law.

The chapters on "Practical Journalism" have been submitted to the scrutiny of several journalists of wide experience, and the author has to express his indebtedness to these professional friends for many helpful suggestions.

It is believed that Mr. Cope's notes on "Newspaper Law" are more comprehensive and complete than anything which has been published previously on the subject.

One other observation only appears necessary by way of preface. There have been innumerable changes of fashion

in journalism in the past, and there may be many more in the future; but it is absolutely certain that there will always be a demand for accurate and well-informed journalistic work on the English Press (of which alone the author is competent to speak) of the description indicated in succeeding pages.

A. B.

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PRACTICAL JOURNALISM

By Alfred Baker

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The Newspaper and Periodical Press, more than any other kind of enterprise, reflects every phase of modern life, whether intellectual or material. In the marvellous advances in scientific invention, many things have been either superseded or transformed; but it does not seem within the region of probability that our daily or weekly journals whose function is to provide news, or our periodicals devoted to every imaginable interest, can be superseded by any more convenient medium for the circulation of information.

That the Press of to-day has defects, some of them serious, probably not even its greatest admirers will deny; but there is one characteristic which everyone will admit that it exhibits to a remarkable degree: It has never stood still, or lagged behind the times, from the days when the removal of fiscal imposts made the production of cheap papers possible. It has also been a striking feature of the newspaper Press of our own and other civilised lands, that every new invention has been utilised to add to the efficiency of the daily journal—from the application of steam to printing machinery down to the employment of the camera and wireless telegraphy. The perfection of organisation which has made possible a simultaneous distribution of a morning journal over a considerable area certainly deserves to rank among the romances of modern enterprise. With such alertness in utilising every practicable invention of the age, the future of the newspaper as one of the great instruments for the promotion of civilisation can hardly be otherwise than secure.

The Scope of Journalism.

An undertaking which, regarded as a whole, is so vast and varied, and one, moreover, which wields such incalculable influence, has demanded the services of men of the most diverse talents and acquirements; that it has enjoyed the advantage of such services ever since journalism became a power in the land, the past history of the British Press abundantly testifies. It is evident to everybody that our newspapers are to-day served by as able pens as during any period of the past; while, in the rank and file of those who devote themselves to journalism, there is a greater variety of ability than at any previous time. The very fact that our papers now deal with every interest and pursuit of the astonishingly varied life of to-day has necessitated a considerable amount of specialisation among those who practise journalism as a means of livelihood. But there is still abundant scope for the "all-round" journalist: the man who is skilful both as a reporter of speeches and trials, and as a descriptive or critical writer; and it is for those who purpose taking up the more ordinary kinds of journalistic work, that this book is designed. It should be borne in mind that a large portion of the journalist's daily work must always be of the kind to be indicated in succeeding chapters, and that the ordinary methods of the craft must be known and practised by all who would seek success as specialists in any particular department of the wide field of modern journalism. There are two things of great importance to all who would practise journalism successfully: The first of these is a practical acquaintance with the methods and usages of the craft; the second, an alert appreciation and ability in the employment of the various mechanical and other inventions for the transmission of intelligence. In succeeding chapters these two points will be kept steadily in view; but there is, after all, a great deal in the making of a successful journalist, in which neither tutor nor text-book can greatly assist.

Definition of "Journalism" and "Journalist."

It has been said that the journalist, like the poet, is born and not made; there is much truth in the saying. Journalism is an intellectual pursuit quite as much as authorship, oratory, music, or art. Some men will attain to great distinction in guiding public opinion on the political questions of the day, while others will make themselves acknowledged authorities as critics of art, music, or sport; and others again will devote financial gifts of no mean order to the service of the public. The exercise of these and similar talents through the medium of journalism cannot be taught either orally or in the printed page, but much guidance can, we think, be furnished to the young journalist which will prove of material assistance to him in the early stages of his career.

A newspaper is such a well-known production, that any definition of its object, purpose, or scope, would be absolutely superfluous. But a definition of the name by which those who fill its pages with intelligence are known appears permissible at the outset of some observations dealing with their work. In a much worn English dictionary, which has seen nearly half a century of service in various newspaper offices, a "journalist" is defined as: "One who writes or conducts a journal or newspaper." The meaning attached to the title is sufficiently comprehensive, but, like most dictionary definitions, it is lacking in detail. To-day, the term is used as describing the occupation of a vast army of men engaged in every department of literary work connected with newspapers and periodicals. Some are employed in the production of leading articles; others in critical notices of various descriptions; others in reporting speeches or arguments, or the results of sports of all kinds. There was, formerly, a tendency to discriminate, and to call some of those engaged in newspaper work, "journalists"; and others, "reporters." But since the establishment of chartered and other societies, it has been found more convenient in this department of the republic of letters to describe all who contribute to newspapers as "journalists." This term will be most convenient

for our present purpose, although the public will probably always call by the familiar term of " reporter " those newspaper writers who are, as it were, in the firing line of the journalistic army. The public sees and knows these men, and understands the work which reporters perform, but of those who are (to use another metaphor) behind the scenes, it exhibits at times a curious absence of knowledge, and appears almost entirely ignorant of the functions of the editorial staff of the newspaper.

CHAPTER II

THE NEWSPAPER STAFF

THE staff of a great morning daily newspaper, as it is conducted in the present day, may be divided into three sections: The first of these consists of the editor and his assistants; and the second, of the chief reporter (or news editor) and his assistants. This combined body of literary workers is permanently engaged in the service of the journal, and its constituent members usually devote the whole, or the greater part, of their time and skill to its interests. There is, in the third section, a large and miscellaneous body of outside contributors attached to every large daily paper, who supply it either regularly or occasionally with items of news, such as market reports, accounts of sales of various descriptions, and intelligence of a special character with which the journal desires to furnish its readers. This class of contributors usually consists of those engaged in occupations which furnish them with special facilities for supplying the facts the editor desires. Another source of news supply is found in the free-lance journalists, who prefer to work independently of any particular paper, and who offer items of a miscellaneous description, which are not likely to have been gathered by the regular staff, or to reach the paper through the news agencies, whose services of telegraphic items of intelligence are familiar to all frequenters of news rooms, clubs, etc.

The Editor.

The head of the newspaper staff, the man whose position resembles that of commander-in-chief of an army, is, of course, the editor. Although the editors of our great daily newspapers exercise a vast influence on public opinion, they do not themselves—except in rare instances—come greatly

before the public. The causes for this mainly arise from the inherent character of British journalism. With few exceptions, the articles are unsigned, and are given to the public as expressing the opinion of the paper rather than of the individuals who produce them. This impersonal characteristic has many advantages, but it effectually hides the personality of the editor, unless that individual elects to become a public man. In most cases, however, the onerous character of the editor's duties obliges him to confine himself to his newspaper work.

The functions of the editor involve the entire management and control of the policy and literary contents of the newspaper, and, as a natural consequence, of the staff which he gathers around him. The contents of every morning paper, apart from the advertisements, is made up of two parts: the first consists of articles giving expression to political opinions, or criticism on other matters of public interest; the second comprises news on every topic of current concern, which is, in most cases, presented impartially and free from bias. It is the first of these two great departments which receives the special attention of the editor, who, to a certain extent, resembles the conductor of an orchestra in dealing with it. He probably does not actually write any of the articles himself, but he undertakes the far more difficult task of directing his assistants as to the subjects to be dealt with, and of controlling the activities of a small band of special correspondents, and so forth. It will be of interest, perhaps, to deal with the editor's functions a little more in detail. The leading articles are written by a special staff of leader writers, directly instructed by the editor, and their work is revised and harmonised by him in accordance with what he has decided shall be the policy of his journal. When great events are in progress at home or abroad, the editor selects from his staff, or secures the services of, individuals best qualified to act as special correspondents. He appoints and controls the activities of a corps of critics and reviewers in the domain of art, literature, and the drama. These men

are not necessarily working journalists, but often hold official or professional positions, and are selected for their special work on account of their fitness to act as critics. Foreign correspondents form an important section of the staff of the largest daily papers, and the editor who appoints them finds it necessary to keep in close touch with their work. On the largest newspapers the duties above mentioned would be too onerous for any man to undertake without competent help. It, therefore, follows that most editors avail themselves of the aid of men who are, in fact, assistant editors, although they may work under some other designation, and these usually exercise considerable control over the staff engaged in the collection and preparation of news.

The Sub-Editor.

A staff of sub-editors is an indispensable feature of every daily newspaper, and, according to locality and the size of the journal, may number from three to eight. Sub-editors do not usually appear at the office of the morning newspaper until most people have finished their labours for the day, and they carry on their duties throughout the night until the newspaper is sent to press in the early hours of the morning. It is the duty of the sub-editors, under the general direction of a senior, to receive all the news brought into the office by the reporting staff, or dispatched to it by foreign correspondents, by local correspondents, and by contributors of every description. They have also to keep a vigilant eye on contemporary journals, in order that no important item of news may escape attention. From the time they take their seats at their desks until the journal is sent to press, they are engaged continuously in the revision and preparation of news copy. No error must escape their notice, and they require to exercise extreme care and judgment in regulating the length of various reports and notices, so that there shall not be at the end of the night's work a number of items "crowded out" owing to want of space. The sub-editors have, in addition, to exercise great care in excluding libellous

or other obnoxious matter, and in verifying any doubtful items of news before deciding to publish. This brief general statement of the work of the sub-editor will enable the reader to appreciate the functions of a little-understood class of newspaper workers.

Reporters and Correspondents.

Every reader of a daily journal is aware that by far the largest portion of its contents is supplied by the reporters who attend public meetings of every description, the deliberations of governing bodies, courts of justice of every category, and events of all kinds in which the public is interested. The most important reporting work done in this country is that performed by the reporters who represent the daily journals in the Galleries of the Houses of Parliament. It should be here explained that this book will not deal with Parliamentary reporting. Those who desire complete information on this subject are referred to Mr. Michael Macdonagh's comprehensive work entitled *The Reporters' Gallery* (Hodder & Stoughton, 12s. net). Only the leading newspapers are represented at Westminster by independent reporting staffs; it is in work of a more diversified character that the reporters of our daily newspapers are employed.

The usual arrangement with regard to the reporting staff is to have a chief reporter, or news-editor, at its head. He is responsible for the compilation of the daily list of engagements, and assigns each of these to the individual member of the staff who, he considers, is most competent to deal with it. He also directs him as to the length and style of his report. In certain instances, but not in all, he exercises some supervision over the work when produced. But, in all cases, the chief reporter of a large staff has to employ considerable powers of control and direction; and when any important gathering occupies the attention of a large part of his staff, he has time for little else beside seeing that all are doing their appointed work in the way required.

Many of the country dailies serve a considerable area:

in some instances, two or more English counties. It would obviously be impossible to dispatch reporters from headquarters to secure news at all the distant towns. Provision is, therefore, made by the appointment of resident district reporters at all large centres of population for collecting the latest local news, which can be transmitted by telegraph or telephone to the head office down to the time of publication. In order to serve his paper efficiently, the district reporter needs to be ever vigilant, active, and resourceful. He has more individual responsibility than the reporters who act under instructions at headquarters, and a really competent discharge of duty will often prove highly beneficial to the paper on which he is engaged.

Most provincial morning papers have a considerable staff of local correspondents. These contributors are sometimes men engaged in various capacities on small weekly newspapers, or they may have no association with journalism. They are expected to supply only the smaller items of intelligence which arise in their town or district, and to give prompt information relative to events of importance with which the regular members of the newspaper staff will be commissioned to deal. The quality of their work and the extent of their enterprise vary greatly. Sometimes the services they render are extremely valuable to the paper; at other times, their remissness is a source of tribulation to sub-editors and chief reporters. A large number of special contributors supply, regularly, brief items of intelligence to the newspapers in the form of market reports, arrivals and departures of various kinds, and so forth. These duties hardly fall within the domain of journalism, but the matter produced demands considerable attention from the editorial staff, in order to secure conciseness, intelligibility, and accuracy.

The evening and weekly newspapers of the country are served by corps organised on similar lines to those of the morning daily journals. Such staffs are, of course, smaller, and there is not the same division of labour. The editor of a weekly newspaper, for example, will himself write the

leaders and pen the critical notices. He will also undertake a portion or the whole of the sub-editorial work. In these duties, however, the reporters at the head office are expected to render considerable assistance. In fact, each individual member of the staff of a weekly paper is a journalist who, in the course of his career, plays many parts.

Staffs of Special Organs.

A vast number of special organs, issued weekly, give occupation to quite an army of journalists. These productions include newspapers devoted to a special trade or profession ; organs of political, religious, or social movements ; and papers devoted to the interests of every imaginable hobby or recreation. The staff of such a journal usually consists of an editor, who is an expert on the subject with which his paper deals, and is not necessarily a working journalist ; and one or more sub-editors, who require to exercise more than usual skill in dealing with matter contributed by experts of varying degrees of literary ability. Such a paper is largely filled by the contributions of writers of the class just described ; and when reports are required, a commission is usually given to reporting or shorthand writing firms for their supply, as the technical or special journal does not keep reporters on its staff.

CHAPTER III

QUALIFICATIONS FOR JOURNALISM

In the present day, when the pursuit of journalism as a means of livelihood, or as a qualification for public life, is receiving more and more attention, it seems desirable to preface any observations on the qualifications for its exercise with remarks on the special characteristics of this description of intellectual work. Three main points demand the serious attention of the tyro.

When making a comparison between newspaper work and other spheres of mental effort, it should be clearly realised that, in spite of the vast increase in the number of journals and periodicals, the total number of journalists cannot be otherwise than limited compared with, for example, the number of school teachers, or the army of clerks, travellers, etc., of all kinds. If not openly avowed, this condition of things would appear to be tacitly recognised by the community. It is rare to find a really competent journalist out of work, and it would, therefore, appear that the calling only attracts a sufficient number to fulfil its requirements.

An "Open Profession."

It should further be remembered that journalism is what is termed an "open profession." It appears likely that the newspaper Press will never be closed to any writer of ability on current events, who can find occupation on any particular journal. The journalist, therefore, finds himself in perpetual rivalry against all comers, and without the prescriptive rights of the medical man or the solicitor, who are protected against any who have not, like themselves, the privilege of being specially registered or enrolled, after they have satisfied the examining bodies as to their competency.

The fact that the entrance to journalism cannot be

restricted does not, however, materially injure those engaged in the calling, because, in order to attain success in its pursuit, there must be, to a greater or less extent, special individual aptitude of a kind which need not be possessed by those admitted after examination to some other professions. When a man has passed through a certain course of examinations, the public has a guarantee that he is reasonably competent to practise as, let us say, an accountant or a dentist; but, on the other hand, although art training is essential, it will not make an artist. Similarly, a man may possess academic degrees, and yet be an entire failure as a journalist, compared with one who has a special aptitude for the work, but has not had the advantage of University training. The journalist who forms and controls public opinion by his brilliant writing, can no more acquire his skill by the aid of the pedagogue or the coach than can the poet, the novelist, or the artist. But in insisting on this final point, we do not desire to overlook the fact that the bulk of the journalistic work in the country is capable of being performed by persons of average ability, who have been trained in the various methods of reporting and sub-editing, which form the greater part of the daily round of newspaper duties.

Qualifications: Physical and Mental.

The qualifications for journalism, like those for most avocations in life, may be considered, broadly, under two heads: There is, in the first place, the physical fitness, which is the more indispensable of the two. No one who is not possessed of a good constitution and considerable powers of endurance should seek to enter the newspaper office. A large section of the work consists of attendance at public proceedings of all kinds, with subsequent labour at the desk. The hours are often long and irregular, and the work of a tedious or troublesome description. It has to be done sometimes in crowded assemblages and at other times when exposed to the rigours of the climate, conditions which can only be successfully faced by those of robust constitution.

For many descriptions of work, good eyesight and a quick ear are indispensable. Much of the reporting, and a greater part of the sub-editing, are done at night, and the strain of continuous night work often makes a serious demand on the strength of the worker, especially where, as is frequently the case, the unfortunate journalist is obliged to work both by night and by day. But against these conditions must be set the fact that there is a greater freedom about journalistic work than exists in connection with employment of a clerical or tutorial description. Travelling by land or sea, and participation in public events of all kinds, afford relief and compensation for a good deal of the drudgery inseparable from the journalistic life.

The essentials for newspaper work which have to be considered in the second place, are those which relate to the mental powers and their development by education. Alertness of mind and a prompt appreciation of the importance of what is said and done in association with public events are indispensable factors in journalistic success. Like other people, a journalist may hold strong views on political or religious questions, but for the bulk of his work he will find it absolutely necessary to possess a mental impartiality which will enable him to present, without bias, the news he contributes to his paper. The lawyer is called upon to devote his skill to the interests of one client alone in any disputed matter; but the journalist who is concerned in supplying his paper with news is, as it were, a professional man who has to look after the interests of the entire public.

The modern journalist cannot be too highly educated for his vocation. Even where he specialises, it is more than probable that a considerable portion of his time will be devoted to the ordinary everyday work of the craft. To discharge such work satisfactorily, a thoroughly sound education forms the best general equipment. But the pursuit of journalism is an education in itself, and what is learned in the school of experience is often more valuable than some kinds of scholastic lore. We shall not attempt to define

what the embryo journalist should or should not have acquired at school, but there are a few broad qualifications, of an educational kind, on which it is of importance to dwell.

English, Handwriting, and Typewriting.

No one can possibly succeed as a journalist who does not possess a good knowledge of English. By this, we mean the ability to compose in English with grammatical accuracy, with clearness, and in a style which will be appreciated by the newspaper reader. Accurate spelling and correct punctuation are absolute essentials in work for the Press. These qualifications are not possessed by all young people. There are many, for example, who are excellent at mathematics, but weak in English. Unless, therefore, there is a pronounced aptitude for writing English accurately and fluently, the tyro is strongly advised not to seek to enter journalism. In spite of the progress made in the use of the typewriter, it is probable that a large portion of the matter from which newspapers are produced will always be in the journalist's own handwriting. The ability to write longhand readily and clearly must always be an important asset in the journalist's equipment. He need not aim at the tiresome regularity and neatness which the writing master so highly esteems, and he should, of course, absolutely avoid the flourishes and other ornaments of the "school of penmanship." But the journalist should make it his aim to cultivate a bold and perfectly clear hand, and, if he is careful on this point at the outset, he will find that speed will develop with the constant practice he obtains, and that in time he will be able to produce reports at the rate of between 30 and 40 words per minute, which will be read with quickness and accuracy by telegraphic clerks and linotype operators. In regard to handwriting, it should, in a word, be the young journalist's aim to write with unmistakable legibility. We are aware, of course, that many gifted journalists have written execrable hands, which only certain expert compositors have been able to turn into print with a fair approach to accuracy. But the average journalist

cannot afford to cultivate a peculiarity which means loss of time and money in the printing office. At the earliest possible moment, every young journalist who aspires to be up to date should acquire the ability to manipulate the writing machine with readiness. The greater ease and quickness with which matter can be produced on the typewriter form an agreeable relief to longhand writing in cases where the machine can be utilised.

Shorthand.

Outside the scope of an ordinary school education, there is one acquirement which is absolutely indispensable for every young journalist who hopes to make a living in newspaper work. We refer, of course, to a knowledge of shorthand writing and the skilled use of it. There are, no doubt, certain members of newspaper staffs who do not know, and, therefore, cannot use, shorthand. They are sometimes inclined to make a virtue of their ignorance, and to assure aspirants that they have never experienced any difficulty from their lack of ability to take a note ; and, no doubt, men of special attainments, as leader writers or sketch writers, are able to discharge their duties without shorthand skill. But the majority of journalists are of the all-round description : men who have to use their pens in a score of different kinds of journalistic work, and the great bulk must always be engaged in the business of reporting speeches and deliberations of all kinds. The young journalist cannot afford to neglect shorthand ; indeed, without considerable practical skill in the use of the art, he will often find it difficult either to obtain or retain a situation. As a matter of fact, there is no practical newspaper editor with whom we are acquainted who would think of adding to his staff a junior assistant who was not an actual or prospective shorthand writer. Instances could be given of men who found occupation in the lower walks of journalism solely through their shorthand ability, and who became in time the most brilliant of leader writers and special correspondents associated with

British journalism. It cannot be too often pointed out that these men made a daily use of their stenographic skill down to the end of their careers. In the present day, Pitman's Shorthand is in universal use among English-speaking journalists in all parts of the world. There was a time when writers of older systems were found at the reporters' table, but these have passed away, and their successors, with insignificant exceptions, are Pitman writers.

In this chapter we have sought to treat only on the broadest lines of the qualifications for journalism. We shall discuss more closely this important theme in later pages.

CHAPTER IV

DUTIES OF THE JUNIOR REPORTER

The youth who enters journalism finds himself in a new sphere—the world of public life. In many other kinds of occupation into which he might find his way on leaving school, it would be possible for him to spend his whole lifetime in a calling which might never afford him the opportunity of attending meetings, being present at ceremonies, hearing trials, or of witnessing many of those scenes in the drama of modern life with its startling mixture of comedy and tragedy. But the young reporter has the opportunity of gaining experience such as does not fall to the lot of those engaged in any other occupation. The knowledge he has the opportunity of acquiring of the movements of the time in politics and religion, in the administration of the government of the country, and in the customs and usages of society, if rightly employed, may carry him very far. From the outset in his career in journalism, he will find in his work, if he takes a proper interest in it, the opening for acquiring knowledge and experience for a successful career in life.

Many who began on the lowest rung of the journalistic ladder have steadily climbed to fame or fortune, and have made their way into Parliament, to the Bar, to official positions of importance, or to a distinguished place in the realms of literature. The knowledge that such things have been possible to others should inspire every young journalist, who has selected newspaper work as his vocation, with the wish to secure that measure of success which his abilities and his opportunities may render possible. To a greater extent than in most other pursuits, success in journalism depends on the personal ability and resource of the individual; and if this fact is overlooked, journalism will hardly be the field in which the aspirant will be able to secure a living.

Elementary Duties of the Recruit.

From these important general considerations, we turn to a discussion of the elementary duties of the young reporter —the alphabet, so to speak, of his calling. The majority of recruits to newspaper work join the staffs of the provincial daily and weekly newspapers, and it is to such that the guidance we are giving more directly applies. First and foremost, the young reporter should be a diligent reader of his own newspaper. In some instances, of course, he may have become acquainted with a considerable portion of its contents by having to assist in the revision of proofs; but whether this be so or not, he should make it his business to be perfectly acquainted with its contents. It may be part of his duty to peruse rival newspapers in order to discover whether these contain news or announcements of which his own colleagues have been unaware. But, be that as it may, he cannot afford to be ignorant of the intelligence presented in the other papers issued in his own town. He will, in the discharge of his duties for his own paper, come across references to the work of rival journalists, and people will not expect him to be without knowledge of it. As the junior progresses in his calling, he can hardly fail to discover that public speakers and officials make frequent reference to events of the day of a general rather than a local character, which cannot be thoroughly comprehended without some acquaintance with the great London daily newspapers. The journalist should, therefore, read a metropolitan daily paper, taking care to select one which is distinguished for the wide scope and solidity of its information, rather than for its sensational and partisan treatment of the news of the day. He should, indeed, seek to be better informed than people generally concerning the events and movements of the time.

Work on a local newspaper necessarily involves a good knowledge of the town in which it is published, and of the district, and an acquaintance, if by name only, with the principal residents. If the junior reporter is exercising his

craft in his native place, such knowledge will come to him by intuition, as it were. But, at any rate, he would do well to extend his acquaintance with local topography, and make himself thoroughly conversant with the railway, the tramway, and other means by which he will be able to get to any given place in the shortest possible time. In this association, it should be noted that ability to use a bicycle is now expected of most reporters for the Press to an even greater extent than in the old days they were expected to be able to drive a horse and trap to distant assignments. The telephone is playing such an important and growing part in newspaper enterprise, that every junior reporter speedily discovers to how large an extent telephone inquiries and the receipt of items of news spoken over the wire, enter into his daily work. Many of the inquiries which the junior had in former times to make by a personal visit to offices and institutions are now more expeditiously done by telephone. The arrangements for Press telegrams are comparatively simple, but the junior should make it his business to find out all about them, in order to be able to get through important items of news with the utmost promptitude.

Junior Reporting Work.

The actual reporting work with which the young journalist will be first entrusted will make no great demands on either his note-taking or his descriptive skill. Under the direction of the senior members of the staff, he will be employed in the collection or verification of some of those innumerable small items of news, which, in the aggregate, form a considerable portion of the intelligence of the day or week, and are usually known in the office as "local paragraphs." Such paragraphs deal with occurrences of the most varied kind: from the mad career of a runaway horse to a public tea-party. Small meetings, which it is impossible to attend, are the subjects of subsequent inquiry with a view to printing a paragraph concerning them. For accidents of all kinds,

members of the police force are the most trustworthy sources of information; while for a proportion of casualties which may not come under the notice of the police, the porters at the hospitals furnish the needful facts. The young reporter, therefore, will obtain the information for his earliest contributions by access to the records of the police station and the hospital. For items of interest regarding occurrences, he will be indebted to the assistance of a number of officials, some salaried, and others honorary. In approaching such a variety of people, the young journalist will speedily discover how great are the differences of personal temperament in those who occupy positions of responsibility, when invited to assist him by disclosing information in their possession. It is a pleasure to make inquiries of some persons in authority. They are courteous and willing to give such news as may be properly communicated to the Press. Others are, unfortunately, quite the reverse, and for various reasons—some of them possibly not very creditable ones—their reception of the innocent young journalist is churlish in the extreme, while the amount of information they are willing to furnish is sometimes so meagre that it will need to be supplemented from other sources. But the junior reporter should never lose either heart or temper in the exercise of these simple interviewing duties. He should remember that, after all, the Press is a talisman which very few can withstand, and that even a disagreeable official may be softened and rendered more useful, from a journalistic point of view, by a complimentary reference in the local newspaper to his courtesy and efficiency. It is the duty of the young reporter to get the news he is directed to obtain by all legitimate means, and he should, from the outset, strive to be all things to all men. Having obtained his information, his next duty is to compose a paragraph containing a concise narrative of the occurrence. He should be careful, in the first place, that the names of the persons and places, and the facts generally, are as accurate as possible; a little inquiry is often needed to secure these things with correctness from an off-hand

informant. The paragraph should record them without exaggeration, and the writer should avoid being either flippant or ponderous. The best paragraph is that in which the largest number of interesting facts are packed in the shortest possible space. Speaking generally, the young reporter should endeavour to follow the style of treatment adopted in his paper; if he does not, trouble with the superior powers in the newspaper office is almost certain.

The novice should endeavour, from the first, to do his work, as far as possible, without reliance on the assistance of other members of the craft, and with the help only of the official information to which all newspaper representatives have an equal right. The novice who enters upon his reporting duties in an unassuming and diligent fashion, will find the representatives of other journals quite willing to extend the hand of good fellowship to the new-comer, and to afford, as occasion arises, such aid as their greater knowledge of the public men and officials, and the procedure of the court or meeting, enables them to furnish. Reporters, as a rule, work very harmoniously, and without occasional aid from a colleague in supplying a missing word or fact, some kinds of reporting would prove very difficult to the tyro; but he should learn early in his career to produce his own reports by his independent efforts, as no colleagues, however amiable, will be inclined to allow him to make a custom of copying their reports. In a word, the junior should have the good sense to avoid a practice which has nothing to recommend it from the point of view of the attainment of useful reporting ability.

Police and Coroners' Courts.

The police court and the coroner's court are usually the scenes of the earliest work of the young journalist. Neither of them makes any demand on whatever shorthand skill he may possess at this early stage of his career, but a few notes on the work in each will not be without value. There is

usually a reporters' box in every police court, provided with a desk and seats; and if the inquiry is conducted at the office of the magistrates' clerk, a table is supplied for the accommodation of the Press. The young reporter will find it a very useful practice to reach the court a few minutes before the investigation commences, when he can obtain, from the superintendent or inspector of police in charge, particulars of the cases to be heard, including the name and other personal details about the accused, and the charge preferred against him. The tyro should note that police court cases fall, broadly, into two groups: One of these consists of charges for which a person is arrested under warrant, and is most correctly described as "the accused," while the police witnesses will speak of him as the "prisoner." The other class of cases is that in which a person appears before the magistrates under a summons, and in all such instances those brought before the court are styled "defendants." The reporter must take particular care to place nothing in his report which is not actually given in evidence (except unimportant descriptive details), and he should give a fair amount of space to any explanation which the accused may make. If headings are given to the cases, he must take care that these do not imply the guilt of the accused, where the proceedings do not end in a conviction. In such instances, he should be careful to introduce the word "alleged."

In the coroner's court, the particulars of the name, occupation, and address of the subject of the inquiry can be obtained from the coroner's officer. After some experience with coroners' juries, the reporter will find little difficulty in recording the verdict at which they arrive. But if he has any doubt on the point, the coroner, or his officer, will readily furnish him with the terms of the verdict which is recorded on the depositions. The guidance furnished above relates only to the everyday work in the courts named. When cases of importance arise, in which solicitors or barristers make speeches and question witnesses, the reporting is undertaken

by a more experienced member of the staff than the junior. But in the small cases, the junior should cultivate the habit of writing out his report as the case proceeds, and, as the depositions are taken in longhand, this course is comparatively easy.

Boards of Guardians.

Meetings of Boards of Guardians, entrusted with the administration of the Poor Law, are usually open to the Press, and, therefore, receive the attention of the local newspapers. The proceedings are often of a humdrum description, and only afford material for a brief report or a paragraph. Here again, however, the junior may find that, at times, the work is entrusted to a senior reporter, when some particular reason arises for reporting fully the speeches or discussions. In different Poor Law Unions, the Guardians perform their deliberative duties in various ways. There is, as a matter of fact, a large amount of business which must be dealt with by the entire Board that is of no interest whatever to the newspaper reader. And as the Guardians do not arrange their proceedings for the convenience of the Press, it happens that considerable time has often to be spent by reporters, in order to secure items of interest sufficient to make up a short report. There are three points on which the young reporter should aim to inform the readers of his paper—these are: (1) the expenditure of the ratepayers' money; (2) the administration of the Workhouse; and (3) the relations of the Guardians with the Local Government Board and its Inspectors. Matters which he will need to be especially careful about are the disputes between the Board and its officers, often involving serious allegations against the character of the latter, and he should call the attention of his chief to anything of this kind. Where a Board takes action resulting in the dismissal of an official, a careful statement of the facts is presented in the newspaper report, but unsupported allegations made in heated debate are often most unsuitable for newspaper publicity.

Religious Gatherings.

There is an innumerable variety of gatherings of religious bodies which are reported briefly in the newspapers, such reports taking the form of a concise statement of names and facts, with the briefest possible record of the eloquence which flows in great abundance on such occasions. The young reporter will always find the lay officials interested in the particular celebration most attentive to the duty of furnishing him with facts of public interest. Sometimes the clergy are very helpful, but in other cases the young reporter will find them neither ready nor willing to assist him. A little experience will, however, soon enable the junior to discover the most suitable persons from whom information can be obtained at proceedings of this kind.

Attitude to the Public.

When he enters upon his reporting duties, the junior reporter will become aware that certain members of the public appear to be specially interested in the reports he is preparing for his newspaper. They will often go the length of directing him to include this or to exclude that from his report. He should be careful to give no undertaking of the kind and, where such a course seems necessary, he should explain, quite politely but firmly, that it is his duty to carry out the instructions of his editor, and that his interrogator should communicate his desires to that gentleman. In the case of police court proceedings, it sometimes happens that the accused party, or his friends, approach a reporter with a view to bribing him to omit the case from his report. The junior reporter should make it clear to all such applicants that he is not to be bought ; that it is his duty to produce a faithful report, and that those interested must take their application to the editor himself. The junior should, of course, mention all such approaches to his superior when handing in his report.

The Office Diary.

There are certain duties inside the newspaper office which fall to the lot of the junior reporter. Of these, the most important is, perhaps, the entering up in the office diary of all the regular and new forthcoming engagements, which will require the attention of the reporting staff. This is a responsible duty, demanding the utmost care and vigilance for its proper discharge. The regular sittings of courts and governing bodies should be first filled in on their appointed days throughout the year. The junior should then make a diligent study of his own journal and other newspapers for announcements of forthcoming events. Bills placed on the notice boards of various public institutions and elsewhere will require to be constantly consulted, while intimations and invitations with regard to a great many coming events are sent direct to the editor. The junior who has to post up the engagement diary should take especial care to enter under the right date and to give with accuracy the place and time. He should remember that an erroneous entry may result in a reporter being sent to a place on the wrong day, and such a mischance is hardly likely to pass without a sharp reprimand. Other duties within the newspaper office, such as proof-reading, etc., will be treated in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE PREPARATION OF COPY

"COPY" is the general term employed in newspaper establishments as descriptive of the manuscript and other kinds of matter which is put in type for the columns of the journal. The foreman printer usually finds it convenient to classify, roughly, the miscellaneous mass of written, typewritten, or printed matter which comes to his hands into two classes: One of these he designates the "news copy," and the other the "advert. copy." It is with the first of these classes alone that the young journalist is concerned. "News copy" is, however, capable of sub-division into two classes, which are usually recognised by the sub-editing staff and the foreman printer and his subordinates. There is, in the first place, the large mass of matter involving a certain degree of literary effort, which is produced by contributors of every kind—from the leader-writer down to the local correspondent. All such work forms more or less interesting reading matter, but there is a second class of "copy" which cannot be so described. This second class is important and valuable, but not entertaining. It consists of stock and share prices, shipping lists, betting odds, market reports, and so forth, made up largely of the latest figures relating to these kinds of information. Such matter is usually supplied by various agencies, and is commonly printed exactly as received. In the vocabulary of the foreman printer, it is either "stuff" or "rubbish," terms which are used quite seriously by him when making arrangements for putting in type the different kinds of matter which form the daily or weekly newspaper.

The Writing of Copy.

In the preparation of his copy, the young journalist should, from the first, aim to produce it in the conventional style, with such modifications as are employed in the particular

usage of his own office. He will soon find that the newspaper office is not a place in which he can safely, or with due regard to his own comfort, indulge in original ways of doing things. The first great cardinal rule to be observed in preparing copy for the printer is to write on one side only of the paper. The journalist is supplied with a quantity of paper in single sheets, usually measuring about $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 8 in., and on this he is expected to write his report. Each single sheet of paper is designated a "slip," and the second and succeeding slips are numbered at the top: 2, 3, 4, and so on. These numbers are known as "folios." And very early in his career the tyro will be called upon to answer some such questions as the following: "How many slips will your report make?" or, "How many folios will your notice run to?" The information thus asked for enables the newspaper staff to ascertain roughly the probable length of any item of news. If the journalist wrote on both sides of his slips there would, of course, be double the amount of matter, but this, as we have explained, he should never do. In the old days of hand type-setting, greater speed in putting a report in type was rendered possible by cutting up each slip of the reporter's copy into two or three pieces, which were each put in type simultaneously by different compositors. But in the present day, with the superior speed possible with linotype machine-setting, the cutting up of copy is not called for, unless in the case of very late news. The necessity for writing on one side of the paper is, however, still imperative; and if a subsequent addition has to be made, the point at which the matter is to be introduced should be marked by a caret, with the direction: "Add 2*a*," or whatever the folio may be, and the added slip should be placed directly after folio 2.

Legibility and Completeness.

From a mechanical point of view, the greatest merit which copy can possess, for all who have to deal with it, is legibility. Every word and every letter should be unmistakable. We

have already dwelt on the importance of clear handwriting, and on the value of the typewriter to the reporter, when he is in a position to use it. A few further general hints on these points may, however, be added. All copy should be written with a fair amount of space between the lines, for any interlineations which the sub-editors, or even the reporter himself, may find it desirable to make. Typewritten matter should be widely spaced ; what is known as " single spacing " is absolutely unsuitable for newspaper work. It should be remembered, moreover, that larger paper is used with the writing machine than is employed for manuscript, and a typewritten folio will consequently contain far more words than the average hand-written slip. The reporter should endeavour to cultivate a uniform standard in the size of his writing and the spacing of his typing, as such uniformity greatly assists both himself and the sub-editor in estimating the length of his report. He should, wherever possible, ascertain the length desired for any particular report, and, by observation of the space his copy takes in type, he should make it his aim to supply exactly what is required.

There are several points in the preparation of copy which need special attention. When it is remembered that in many cases the reporter has no opportunity of correcting a proof, it will be obvious that the essential of legibility, on which we have dwelt, is of special importance. Clear copy is more likely to be turned into correct print than slovenly manuscript. Special attention should be paid to indicating paragraphs quite distinctly, and care should be taken to write the copy, so far as the use of headings of different descriptions is concerned in accordance with the practice of the office. In a word, the reporter should aim to turn out his copy in absolutely complete form as to arrangement and punctuation. Before it leaves his hands, he is advised to read his work carefully through, and to correct any errors or omissions he may find. But it is not always possible to do this, for there are times when the messenger from the office fetches away the reporter's copy as fast as he can

write it, or when he has the foreman printer constantly at his elbow pouncing on every slip as he writes it, for the purpose of putting it in type without the loss of a moment. The cultivation of a habit of cool and careful preciseness in the production of copy is, at moments such as these, of the utmost value to the reporter and his newspaper.

Longhand Press Contractions.

In most of the newspaper offices of the country, the reporters use Longhand Press Contractions in writing their copy. A considerable amount of time is saved by their use, and their habitual employment greatly facilitates quick work. The young journalist would do well to strictly adhere to the recognised abbreviations. Deviations from established usage are most dangerous. Some reporters, for example, persist in writing *fr* for the word *for*, instead of the standard abbreviation *f*. Very recently, a linotype operator on a leading journal, with the wrong abbreviation before him, set the word as *from*. On other occasions, the same mistake has arisen from the same cause; and the liability to error has led one experienced newspaper conductor to decree that longhand abbreviations must not be employed in the copy sent to his paper. But where contractions are used, care must be taken that they are properly formed and that single letters representing words are not joined to others.

The Postmaster-General in 1914 gave his sanction to a Code of Abbreviations for use by telegraphists in the transmission and writing out of messages for the Press. This list contains a larger number of abbreviations than had been previously used by newspaper men, but they are all easily understood; and copies of the Code should be found in all newspaper offices, for the use of reporters, sub-editors, and type-setting machine operators. The abbreviations for the most frequently occurring words have been used for many years, and are familiar to all engaged in journalistic work. The tyro should memorise and use these first, and gradually master the whole list. The complete Post Office Code of

Longhand Abbreviations will be found at the end of this volume.

The Delivery of Copy.

It will not be without value to furnish a few hints respecting the delivery of copy. When a report is completed, the most useful way in which it can be handed to the sub-editor is by folding it once, with the writing of the first page containing the heading outside. When a pile of copy is formed on the sub-editor's desk, he can, through the employment of this method, see at a glance what the reports are about, and readily prepare them for the printer. The same course should be adopted with regard to other matter. Each paragraph or short article should be folded separately, so as to be complete in itself. In the top left-hand corner of the first slip should be indicated the character of the news. If a local paragraph, it is customary to write "local"; if an account of a cricket match, "cricket," etc., according to the classification of news adopted by the newspaper. Finally, the reporter should so complete his work, in every respect, that the sub-editor is given no needless trouble.

Writing Instruments and Materials.

The choice of writing instruments is one which must be largely left to individual preference, but a few hints may, however, not be without value. Whether pen or pencil be employed, the writing should be *black*, and any purple or coloured ink or pencil should be avoided; while, as regards typewriting, "black record" ribbon or pad, should be used for all Press work. A fountain pen with a strong and serviceable nib, and an enlarged ink reservoir, will prove invaluable to any reporter. Copy should be produced as much as possible with the pen, but many occasions arise when pencil writing alone is possible. There are various good automatic pencils fitted with leads capable of making a distinct black mark, and a careful selection should be made of one of these. For both fountain pens and pencils, it will be found most

economical in the end to obtain the appliances produced by the leading makers.

The reporter has frequent occasion to produce several copies of a particular item of news or report. In order to do this, he has recourse to the process known as manifolding. He procures a supply of sheets of very thin paper, or a book or block of such paper, and produces the number of copies required by placing paper coated on both sides with a black pigment alternately with the thin paper. He uses an agate "Stylus" as a writing instrument, giving sufficient pressure to secure legible copies of the report. These thin paper copies are generally spoken of as "flimsies," and the carbon paper which produces them as "blacks." Care should be taken in procuring carbon paper, to see that it is black on both sides, as more legible copies are obtainable with such, and legibility is the only quality aimed at. In manifolding by means of the typewriter, carbon paper coated on one side only is generally used, in order not to disfigure the backs of the copies. But this consideration does not trouble the reporter in hand manifolding. A journalist having a strong wrist can easily produce half a dozen legible flimsies; in many cases a larger number is successfully turned out.

CHAPTER VI

REPORTING POLITICAL SPEECHES

In proceeding to describe and consider the ordinary staff duties of the journalist, we give first place to the reporting of political speeches, for two reasons. The most important function of the Newspaper Press is unquestionably the dissemination of political information, and all the signs of the times indicate that in the future, the newspapers of the country will continue to exercise a great influence in shaping its political destinies. Such being the position which the Press holds, it naturally follows that journalists need to be well equipped for dealing with the work involved in the supply, by the papers they represent, of political news to the public.

The Importance of the Work.

From time to time we hear a great deal about new journalism and novel methods, and there can be no doubt that the British Press is conducted with an amount of energy and ability which utilises everything tending to make the journals of to-day more bright and serviceable to the community. We are sometimes told that, in pursuance of this policy, the newspapers of the future will cease to report speeches at length, and will devote their columns to matter which is supposed to be more attractive. But we are faced by the important consideration that political speeches are as fully and, in fact, more generally, reported to-day than they were in the past. This is obvious to the most casual observer. When a great political speech is delivered, the halfpenny morning papers vie with each other in giving verbatim reports of it, and in calling the attention of the public to the fact by the most sensational methods of modern journalism. If we put aside such embellishments as "scare headings," descriptive additions, and so forth, we find that

the newspapers still give a faithful and full report of the political address, and that the production of such a report has demanded the services of efficient verbatim shorthand note-takers in its preparation. And what is done by the great dailies in regard to the speeches of leaders of the Government and of the Opposition, is done in similar fashion by the provincial Press of the country in regard to the addresses of Members of Parliament to their constituents. If, therefore, the young journalist who is seeking a wide field for the exercise of his craft should be advised that it is immaterial whether he can write shorthand or not, we think that what we have related above in regard to one sphere only of journalistic work, will force him to the conclusion that he cannot, with advantage to himself, afford to neglect the art of shorthand.

Shorthand Writing Ability Indispensable.

The shorthand skill should be such as to admit of the production of what is usually termed a verbatim report, but which is, in effect, a full report of the speaker's observations, with the omission of redundant expressions and repetitions. Most speakers have a small set of colloquial terms which are introduced in and out of season. These are effective enough on the platform, but are judiciously omitted from the newspaper report, which is, in fact, greatly improved by their omission. The primary qualification needed to report a political speech fully and exactly, so far as every material statement and special form of expression is concerned, is, of course, the ability to take a shorthand note at a fairly high speed, which the writer should be able to transcribe into longhand with readiness and accuracy. By steady practice, of which he may secure a good deal in the course of his daily attendance at public gatherings of all sorts, the young journalist should be able to raise his speed to an average of from 140 to 150 words per minute. He should not be satisfied with less than this rate, as ascertained by dictation practice with counted matter. Such practice should

supplement the opportunities he has of taking notes from actual speakers. The effort to attain the useful speed enumerated should be made in the early part of the journalist's career, when he has more spare time than he is likely to find later on; and, once possessed, this useful speed will become an acquirement for life, provided that the art is not entirely neglected, but is used for the various purposes to which shorthand can be put in journalistic work. Without discussing at length the *minutiæ* of speed practice, it will suffice to state here that great pains should be taken by the young journalist to cultivate absolute accuracy in note-taking and transcribing. Most of the ludicrous errors which occur in newspaper reporting work may be traced to slovenly habits of note-taking.

The ability to write shorthand at a fairly high speed gives the reporter a sense of power and freedom in his work which is not possessed by the scribe who has to strain every nerve to get on his note-book the words of a speaker. It does not follow, of course, that speeches which are reported fully and in the first person are, in the ordinary way, delivered at a high rate of speed. They are not; and many great orators, even in impassioned moments, have not exceeded 120 words per minute; but there are times when the speaker makes a rapid impromptu reply to "a voice" in the audience, and the ability to record fully points of this kind, without loss of any of the speaker's utterance, is possible only to the reporter who has a reserve of speed to help him. Sometimes it is inevitable that the reporter is a sentence in the rear of the speaker, and here, again, his speed ability will enable him to cover the lost ground with ease and once more keep close behind the speaker. A public meeting, and especially a political one, is frequently a place in which the highly wrought feelings of the audience find expression in vocal sounds of approval or disapproval. Unless the orator has the delivery of a stentor, a certain proportion of his speech will be drowned by such sounds, and a ready ear, combined with a quick imagination, will have to be

constantly exercised in securing the exact words of the speaker.

Political Knowledge Necessary.

The skill necessary to take a good note is not the only qualification the reporter should possess. Unless he is thoroughly acquainted with the political problems of the time, and has a knowledge of the names and views of the political leaders and parties, he will be constantly at fault in his reporting work. Happily, there is no lack of cheap and accessible literature on the political topics of the day and on the various "isms" which are constantly coming to the front. These can be studied according to opportunity or inclination, but no reporter should fail to keep himself constantly informed on the course of foreign and domestic politics, as recorded from day to day in the columns of *The Times* and some other newspapers. Probably the most useful reading as a qualification for political reporting is found in the Parliamentary Debates. Every subject of interest in home and foreign politics receives attention at Westminster, and political speakers discuss what is proposed and done there more than they do anything else. In a word, to report successfully political speeches, the reporter needs to be a keen political student.

The Corps System of Reporting.

The actual method by which full reports of speeches are prepared for the newspaper Press is described below. The end to be attained in all work of this kind is to have long-hand copies of the speech produced while the speaker is actually addressing the meeting, in order that the whole speech may be telegraphed to every daily newspaper office in the kingdom for publication on the morning after delivery. To effect this end, a corps of reporters is organised from among the local newspaper reporters, and to execute this special work the representatives of two or three journals will often work in co-operation. To form an adequate corps,

nine reporters will be needed, although the work is sometimes performed with a rather smaller staff. One member of the corps is appointed time-keeper and general manager, and another attends to the collection, arrangement, and dispatch to the telegraph office of the report of the speech. For the use of the seven actual note-takers, a plan is drafted as under—

Smith . . . A	H	P	X	ee
Jones . . . B	J	Q	Y	ff
Brown . . C	K	R	Z	gg
Robinson . . D	L	S	aa	hh
Thomas . . E	M	T	bb	jj
Johnson . . F	N	U	cc	kk
James . . . G	O	W	dd	ll

The time-keeper has his watch before him when the speaker rises and begins his speech. Mr. Smith takes notes, and, when he has been so engaged for two minutes, he is stopped at the end of a sentence, and the time-keeper gives Mr. Jones the signal to go on. The latter takes notes for a similar time, and so on down the entire list. Meanwhile, Mr. Smith is transcribing his two minutes' " take," numbering the sheets " Sec. A1, A2, A3," and so on, writing at the end of the last sheet : " Section B to follow." Mr. Jones, of course, numbers his sheets : " Section B1, B2, B3," etc., finishing " Section C to follow." A sufficient number of copies are made by " manifold," for local and telegraphic purposes respectively ; and as the transcription proceeds, the sheets are gathered and put in order by the collector and dispatched in small batches to the Post Office, for telegraphing—relays of telegraph messengers being in attendance for the conveyance of the messages to the office. By this arrangement the transcript of the speech is finished within a very few minutes

after the speaker has resumed his seat, and within an hour (or a little more) the completed speech will be in type in every morning newspaper office in the country, no matter how distant.

Condensed Reports.

Verbatim reports of political speeches are not of very frequent occurrence, and the reporter may work for a long time on the Press before he is called upon to take part in reporting a Cabinet Minister. But of everyday speeches, reported at varying degrees of length, political addresses certainly predominate. In condensations of such addresses, the speech is reported in the third person, and the reporter will soon discover that this fact enables him to make a far more concise and readable summary than would be possible were the summary produced in the first person. In all condensations of speeches, the reporter should take especial care to follow the main line of argument of the speaker, omitting superfluous illustrations of the theme and other extraneous matter. Should the speaker, in his zeal for his cause, make a direct personal attack on any individual, the reporter should take care to have a verbatim note of the observations, which will be published or not, as the news-editor may determine. The young reporter is strongly advised, not only to be in his place early, but to see the meeting through to the end, unless he has to catch a train, or is specially directed by his chief to leave before the proceedings terminate, in order to attend to some other work. In a political meeting, one can never be quite certain that a sensational incident may not crop up even when the votes of thanks are being proposed, and editors are keenly alive to the value of "copy" recording such incidents.

When instructed to furnish his journal with a short report of a political gathering, say, a quarter-column, half-column, or column, the reporter will not, of course, take a full note of the speeches. The proceedings will probably last more than two hours, and he should, from the outset, cultivate the

ability to write out his longhand report as the meeting proceeds. Before the speaking commences, he will find it possible to write what is termed "the introduction," consisting of a statement of the place at which the meeting is held, its object, the names of those who support the speakers on the platform, and other items of general interest. The reporter will then listen carefully to the speeches, jotting down in shorthand the most important statements, and concurrently writing out his copy for the paper. By this means, he will be able, with the assistance of the ubiquitous telegraph messenger, to get his report on the wire early in the evening or, if the meeting takes place in the town in which his office is situated, he will have the satisfaction of delivering his report to the news-editor, directly after the meeting rises.

The Reporter's Impartiality.

The methods of reporting the speeches of political supporters and opponents vary greatly, and the young reporter must take his cue from his instructions and the style adopted by his paper. High-class journals usually publish reports of all political speakers in an impartial fashion, whatever the politics of the orators. But at periods of contested elections such a policy is often quite impossible, and they then elect to devote the space available to the speeches of those candidates who support the political party with which the newspaper is identified. The better class of journal will scorn to pursue any other policy in its news columns than accurate and fair reporting of speeches within the limits of available space. But there are newspapers of the baser sort which allow their reporters to supply its columns with a biased travesty of the speech of a political opponent. Many journalists do not care to undertake work of this description because it turns the reporter into a partisan, and the public, which is a shrewd judge of newspaper work, loses confidence in the impartiality of the news columns of a journal when such matter is inserted. From the outset, and as long as he remains at the reporters' table, it should be the journalist's

sincere endeavour to report every speaker fairly. Such a course will gain him the esteem and respect of all politicians, while the display on his part of partisan feeling is calculated to arouse resentment, which may render the performance of his duties unpleasant and irksome. The course recommended is quite possible and compatible with absolute loyalty to the newspaper he represents.

CHAPTER VII

REPORTING RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS

NEXT in importance to the reporting of political speeches must be placed the duty of recording addresses at religious gatherings of all kinds. We do not attempt by this classification to assess the relative importance of religion and politics: we are merely regarding these two great classes of oratory from the point of view of the newspaper note-taker. Without doubt, some other descriptions of news are more eagerly perused than reports of religious addresses, but no newspaper —at any rate, no provincial one—can afford to leave unnoticed utterances of this description. The ordinary London morning newspapers do not, it is true, pay any great attention to religious gatherings taking place in the metropolis, but it must not be forgotten that, in the London weekly Press, avowedly religious journals are vastly more numerous than any other kind, and the work of recording the sermons, speeches, and addresses reported in these journals gives a vast amount of employment to metropolitan reporters.

Sermon Reporting.

In a general way, religious addresses fall into two distinct classes: The first of these consists of sermons delivered in places of worship, and the second of speeches uttered on the platform. Unless, on exceptional occasions, it is not usual to report fully in the columns of newspapers sermons of a purely doctrinal character. But sermons in which questions of the day are discussed from the standpoint of the particular religious body to which the remarks are addressed, are often regarded as of so much public interest that they are reported fully. When sermons are written, it is sometimes possible to borrow the preacher's manuscript, from which the reporter can copy as much of the sermon as he proposes to publish. Assistance of this kind cannot, however, be always relied on.

Many sermons are delivered extempore; in some instances, preachers take into the pulpit only a few brief notes; and in not a few cases, clergymen absolutely decline to lend their manuscripts to the reporters. Once, when approached by a reporter with a request for his manuscript, an eminent ecclesiastic made refusal in a question framed in the following terms: "Why should I give you my sermon, when Messrs. ——— " (naming an eminent publishing firm) " will pay me so much per printed page for it?" This is the attitude observed by not a few popular preachers of all denominations towards the harmless, necessary reporter. And when this attitude is assumed, it is of no use whatever for the reporter to assure the preacher that his words have a higher value than the cheque they will bring from Paternoster Row. The well-equipped reporter knows, of course, that if he wants to publish a report of a sermon he can rely on his own note-taking ability, and, if he is thoroughly efficient, he will sometimes have the satisfaction of receiving a message from the preacher to the effect that the report is superior to the manuscript sermon.

Qualifications and Aids for the Work.

For the successful reporting of sermons, there are two indispensable essentials, whether a full report or a summary is published. These essentials are a fair degree of shorthand speed, and a wide, but not necessarily deep, acquaintance, with theological and poetical literature. The most difficult passages to report in many sermons are the quotations introduced by the preacher, and very often delivered by him in such a fashion that only a most expert note-taker can secure every word. And brilliant flashes of inspiration come to the eloquent preacher, which are often delivered at an exceedingly rapid rate. When it is further remembered that a place of worship frequently has very tiresome acoustic defects, and that suitable seating accommodation is not always to be had, it will be seen that environment is a difficulty with which the sermon reporter has to contend.

It is neither possible nor practicable for the reporter to have a theological education, but there is a certain minimum of knowledge without which he could not efficiently report the sermons at the various Christian places of worship, at which he may find it desirable to exercise his vocation. The best qualification for sermon reporting, from this point of view, is a knowledge of the contents of the English Bible and of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. Both these volumes are something more than sacred books: they are important portions of our national literature; and no reporter of any kind of oratory can afford to be ignorant of them. In proof of this statement, it may be mentioned that the eighth Duke of Argyll once completely nonplussed the entire reporting corps in the Gallery of the House of Lords by introducing a quotation from the Psalter of the English Prayer Book into one of his speeches. When sermons are very fully reported, the reporter will find it absolutely necessary to verify the scriptural quotations. Fortunately, full concordances to the Authorised and Revised Versions, and to the Prayer Book, are to be found in all good reference libraries, and these will solve many difficulties which arise in the accurate transcription of the scriptural quotations, often made from memory by preachers. A copy of Cruden's Concordance is so serviceable in connection with religious reporting, that every reporter engaged in such work should possess his own copy.

In sermon reporting, whether full or condensed, the reporter should take care to secure the text of Scripture on which the discourse is based. Except when a fairly full report is given, he need not necessarily quote the words from the Bible, but should give the reference to the book, chapter, and verse, from which the text is taken. Condensation of sermons is not altogether so easy as it was a generation ago, when preachers, almost invariably, divided their discourses into sections, which were indicated by: first, secondly, and so forth. This artificial arrangement saved the reporter a certain amount of mental effort, which has to be exercised

in producing a satisfactory précis of the modern sermon. Very careful attention to the whole discourse is necessary, in order to secure the salient points ; and the reporter who does not propose to produce a full report, should either be careful not to take exhaustive notes, or he should specially mark in the margin of his note-book those passages which are of vital importance.

Meetings and Conferences.

Gatherings for the administration of the business affairs of the churches are usually reported in the newspapers, and occupy a fairly large amount of the time and attention of the newspaper reporter. These meetings may be divided into two classes : those which deal with the affairs of a religious denomination as a whole, or with a large section of it ; and those which are of a purely local character, in which, for example, the concerns of a single congregation only are discussed. At the meetings of national, district, or diocesan assemblages, there is usually a well-arranged agenda or programme circulated in print, and from this the reporter learns the names of the speakers, as well as the subjects on which they have arranged to speak. The secretary, or secretaries, of the meeting very readily furnish the Press with any documents, in the shape of reports or statistical returns, which it is desirable to notice in the newspaper. It is far more satisfactory to copy these documents to the extent required, than to attempt to take a shorthand note of a statement read in a hasty or perfunctory manner. In many cases, carefully prepared papers are read, copies of which are given to the representatives of the Press, but, even with such aid, there is still a good deal of note-taking to do at gatherings of this kind. Animated discussions arise, and it is not always easy, especially when speakers follow each other rapidly, to secure their names. The chairman of the meeting ought, of course, to announce each speaker as he rises to address the assemblage, but for many reasons chairmen often fail to do this. When a speaker from the audience

goes to the platform, the reporter will find it a good plan to ask him for his name after he has spoken, while he is making his way back to his seat. But where speakers jump up, like " Jacks-in-the-box," and address the chair from all parts of the room, the Press should make a courteous request to the chairman to ask each speaker for his name. In some cases, of course, the secretary, who usually sits by the chairman's side, can furnish the information desired. The reporter at religious gatherings of an administrative character needs to be especially careful in recording the actual decision of the meeting on resolutions or amendments submitted. Frequently, the business is conducted in a most informal way, and resolutions are agreed to without the formality of putting them to the meeting. In case of doubt, the reporter should not fail to ask the secretary what is the actual decision on, say, a number of proposals, which have been discussed at the same time in a perfectly perplexing way.

Controversial Oratory.

It is a matter of frequent occurrence for religious bodies to engage in missionary or controversial efforts, and the work of propaganda is most frequently accomplished through the medium of public meetings. The reporter who attends such meetings finds himself in an atmosphere highly charged with enthusiasm for some particular cause, or it may be with animosity against some particular persons or opinions. The duty of reporting such gatherings is comparatively simple, because the speakers make direct appeals to their hearers in terms which are easily understood and appreciated. Many of the addresses which arouse the audience to the utmost fervour for the cause, or heighten their prejudices against their opponents, contain very little matter worthy of presentation in cold print, and a descriptive style of recording the addresses is the best that can be adopted for the benefit of the newspaper reader. Thus, when the individual just named reads that Mr. Smith has been affirming certain things, asserting others, and urging something else,

he can form his own conclusions as to the kind of oratory which prevailed. The reporter needs to be careful not to allow his own opinions, if he has any, to influence him when preparing his report. He should aim at producing a report which will be acceptable to the promoters of the meeting, as a statement of their views, while it is not offensively antagonistic to those whose ideals and practice are different. In a word, the reporter's art consists in relating to the public what he has heard without appearing to endorse its truth.

CHAPTER VIII

REPORTING SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS, LECTURES, ETC.

THE annual gatherings of the great associations, to which the general designation of scientific may be most conveniently applied, are not often encountered by the average reporter, unless he is connected with a daily newspaper which makes a point of being regularly represented by its own reporter at the movable meetings of such bodies. But scientific societies of various descriptions exist in most large centres of population. Many of these promote some special branch of technical research associated with the staple industries of the place. Others investigate natural phenomena or devote themselves to antiquarian inquiry, or the study of the fine arts. These smaller bodies, because they are so numerous and deal with such varied subjects, make a more serious demand on the resources and attainments of the reporter—as will be seen from what follows—than the great yearly peripatetic assemblages of men of science, which he may not be called upon to take part in reporting more than once or twice in a lifetime.

The British Association.

As a typical example of a national scientific gathering, no better illustration can be offered than the British Association. This famous organisation has been in existence for over eighty years, and, as it is always well reported in the Press of the Empire, two things may be fairly inferred —that its proceedings are of general public interest, and that it is on good terms with the newspaper Press. Both inferences are correct, and it follows, therefore, that whenever the British Association visits any particular town, the leading newspapers of the place make special arrangements for reporting its proceedings, and the daily newspapers of London and of the large cities vie with each other in sending

special representatives. The British Association opens with the President's address, and on the following day a number of sections devoted to various branches of science begin their sittings in different places of meeting, each being opened with a special address by the chairman of the section. For several days following, papers are read in each section. All the matter mentioned above is distributed to the reporters in print beforehand, that is to say, the Press is supplied with a full text of all the addresses, and with concise summaries of all the papers read. As far as reporting is concerned, therefore, only the discussions and complimentary speeches, with possibly a popular lecture, call for note-taking ; but the difficulty which newspaper conductors have to face is to be found in the fact that there are, perhaps, a dozen sections meeting simultaneously. Different expedients are adopted by newspapers desirous of having a complete report of every section. Either extra reporters are engaged, or arrangements are made by which the staff on one paper will take certain sections, while the representatives of another devote their attention to other sections, and by the exchange of copy, or proofs, both papers secure the coveted complete report. Where, however, a complete report is not aimed at, it is quite possible for one or two reporters, with the aid of the printed addresses and summaries of papers, to produce a good report. A certain proportion of the papers and discussions are not of interest to the average newspaper reader, and by treating these very briefly, the reporter, or reporters, can concentrate attention on the interesting discussions. In addition to the features named above, there is usually a popular scientific lecture, while an afternoon or evening may be devoted to a discussion on a selected subject. The popular lecture is usually reported with some fullness, but the discussion is often too abstruse for newspaper treatment. Not quite to the same extent, but on somewhat similar lines, are the various annual conferences conducted, which are concerned with the health, the education, and the material interests of the nation.

Local Scientific Societies.

On a smaller scale, and at more frequent intervals, are the gatherings of scientific bodies in every town of importance. It is too much to expect the reporter to be a walking encyclopædia, and therefore, he must report such meetings with any aid he can secure from the literature on the subject. Fortunately, many speakers who give addresses on particular questions, reduce their speech to writing. In most cases where the theme is an abstruse one, they are thus enabled to secure exactitude in their statements, and they usually readily assist the reporter with the loan of their manuscript. But there are occasions when addresses on scientific subjects are given without notes, and the speeches in the discussion following are, of course, delivered impromptu. As the reporter can ascertain, as soon as the agenda is issued, what are the subjects of discussion, he would do well to read up something about them beforehand. We once knew a journalist who prepared himself for the task of fully reporting a homœopathic conference by studying a standard treatise on the subject. He was commended for the accuracy of his report, and his example is worthy of imitation.

A Classification of Lectures.

Lectures may be classified in three groups. There are those delivered by men of eminence, whose utterances on a particular question arouse great public interest, and who are consequently reported at considerable length. Then there are paid lecturers, men who go through the country advocating some particular views in relation to scientific or social questions. Sometimes such lectures are reported at length, in other cases the address is dealt with in a paragraph—a great deal depends upon the local support given to the lecturer; if it is influential, and the chairman is a man of position, more attention will naturally be paid by the newspapers to the lecture than when such support is lacking. Finally, there are the professional lecturers, of which the late Max O'Rell may be cited as a type. These

lecturers repeat their addresses to audiences in different towns, and if they were fully reported, a large part of the interest of their remarks would be lost for future audiences. It is customary, therefore, to report such lectures in the form of a short descriptive and appreciative sketch, somewhat after the fashion of the notices given to the performances of public entertainers.

Popular and Abstruse Lectures.

Another classification of lectures must not be overlooked. There are popular lectures, and there are abstruse lectures. The first-named class presents very little difficulty to the average reporter, because the subject is treated in a style which can be readily understood by a miscellaneous audience. The second class presents difficulties to the reporter which are, in some cases, absolutely insuperable. He may encounter in a scientific lecture, delivered to a body of experts, a nomenclature of which he is quite ignorant. It is no discredit to him that this should be so, because he cannot be expected to have had the training of, let us say, an electrical engineer, or a surgeon. But to report such a lecture by his own unaided efforts is an absolute impossibility. Fortunately, such lectures do not appeal to the great body of newspaper readers, and the best course for the reporter to follow is undoubtedly to give only an outline of the address, with the help of such assistance as he can derive from the lecturer's notes. It often happens that scientific lectures are illustrated by means of the optical lantern, and, in such cases, the lights are turned off and the room is practically in darkness. If the reporter is near enough to it, some reflected light from the sheet may enable him to see the pages of his note-book. But this cannot be relied on, and he should, therefore, be prepared to take notes in the dark. For this purpose, a lead pencil should be employed, and a book of unruled paper used—"Fono" Note-Book No. 6 is very suitable. The lines of notes should be written widely apart and vocalised freely. If the notes

are not written over each other, it will be found that they can easily be read. In some cases, a reporter can use with advantage a small pocket electric lamp.

Interesting Work.

In spite of the difficulties of the work, most reporters, we believe, find the reporting of lectures full of interest. When a little experience has been gained, the journalist will appreciate the fact that every lecture he attends adds to his store of scientific knowledge, and, while making him a better-informed man, renders this class of reporting more easy of accomplishment. The contact with distinguished men of science is, in itself, an inspiration. The newspaper reporter will often be agreeably surprised to find how courteous and helpful men of science, whose fame is world-wide, can be to him in the discharge of his duties. There are, of course, lecturers of another type, whose knowledge is not so profound, and who give the least possible legitimate assistance to the reporters in the most churlish fashion. But, by contact with lecturers of both types, the reporter should speedily learn both tact and discrimination.

CHAPTER IX

REPORTING LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

PROCEEDINGS in the administration of justice, the preservation of order, and the enforcement of various statutes, designed for the public protection, are held in public and reported in the newspapers. We have already dealt with the police court and the coroner's inquest, two simple forms of investigation, on which the English or Irish junior reporter usually has an opportunity of trying his prentice hand. But, as we propose to show, there are many other descriptions of judicial inquiries of a more important character, which furnish a large amount of occupation to the working journalist. The proceedings at some of these courts are simple and straightforward, so that even a junior should be able to produce a satisfactory report. In other cases, legal terms are freely used, and points of law are discussed between judge and counsel in a fashion which only a lawyer can understand, and only an expert reporter possesses the needful experience to report satisfactorily.

Assizes.

The periodical Assizes, held in the various county towns of England, usually twice yearly, and in a few instances more frequently, receive considerable attention from the local Press. At these courts, the trial of prisoners for the graver offences against the law, and the hearing of civil actions of an important character, take place. The time has passed when the Assizes were attended with a display of pageantry which enlivened the drab streets of the sleepy county towns with a spectacle of Tudor costumes, javelins, and trumpeters. But if the display is now quieter in colour, the majesty of the law is not less impressive in this twentieth century. The young reporter, who is attending the Assizes for the first time, should, if his duties permit, witness the whole of the public ceremonial.

The proceedings at the Assizes begin with the arrival of the Judge or Judges. The High Sheriff meets these august personages at the railway station, and conducts them in his carriage, with an escort of police, to the court house, where the Commission of Assize is opened. The ceremony is quite formal; everyone stands up in court to listen to the reading of His Majesty's Commission to the Judges, whose names are mentioned, to administer justice in the name of the King. The ceremony is gone through with a seriousness which befits the occasion, and the reporter must be careful not to exhibit any disrespect in the presence of the Judges, who maintain the dignity of their office on Assize in a most impressive fashion. The ceremony is very brief, and the Judges then proceed in state to the cathedral or principal church in the town to attend divine service. The sermon is delivered by the Sheriff's Chaplain, and, if it should happen that he is a preacher of distinction, the newspaper will give an adequate report of the sermon. But, generally, a short summary suffices.

The Crown Court.

The business of the Crown Court usually begins some hours after the arrival of the Judges, or it may be on the following morning. The court-house then presents a busy scene. Some time before the Judges arrive, the witnesses and jurymen, who have been summoned to attend, and a number of barristers, solicitors, and officials put in an appearance; and more important even than these, the prisoners for trial, are brought to the place under safe escort from the county gaol. The portions of the court allotted to the public are usually well filled. The accommodation for the Press is not always of the most convenient description, but usually reporters are so placed that they can hear well. It is a common arrangement to have the seats for the Press below, or near to, the jury box.

From the moment the Judge enters the court, the reporter cannot fail to be impressed with the humanity and fairness

with which the trial of prisoners is conducted. The first procedure is the swearing-in of the Grand Jury, which is selected from among the men of position in the county or city. The list of the Grand Jury is given in the newspapers, and the reporter will find little difficulty in making a list of the foreman and his colleagues, as their names are read out by the Clerk of Assize. The function of the Grand Jury is to investigate the evidence which has been given before the magistrates, in order to ascertain if it is sufficient to warrant a prisoner being put on his trial. To guide them, the Judge delivers a charge to the Grand Jury, in which he calls their attention to such points as appear desirable, and they are dismissed to their duties. The charge is reported at some length in the newspapers, but the members of the Bar are absent from court during its delivery. The Grand Jury sit in private, and begin by investigating some comparatively simple case, so that in a few minutes an official of the court presents their decision to the Judge. They have found a " True Bill " against some particular prisoner, and the trials now begin. From time to time during the day's proceedings, the cry of " Grand Jury " is heard in court, and public announcement is made of their findings. The reporter will have obtained, immediately on his arrival, a printed copy of the calendar of prisoners from the governor of the prison, and he should write upon it the decisions of the Grand Jury as they are announced. In the majority of cases, a " True Bill " will be returned, and the individual concerned will, in due course, stand his trial. But all the trials will not take place in one day, and, therefore, if the reporter is working for a morning or evening newspaper, he should conclude his report with a statement that " True Bills " had been returned against those prisoners who had not been actually tried. He should, of course, also report any arrangements made for fixing the date or time of particular trials. There is one other finding of the Grand Jury which should on no account be neglected; we refer to the occasions on which they find " No Bill " against a

prisoner. In these instances, the accused is not put on his trial, but is at once a free man. Occasionally on some question of public importance, the Grand Jury make a presentment. This is in the form of a resolution, and is brought into court personally by the Grand Jury. Its terms should be exactly recorded by the reporter, who should be equally careful in reporting observations of the Judge concerning it.

Procedure at a Criminal Trial.

As soon as the first "True Bill" is found, the prisoner concerned is placed in the dock, and the counsel engaged in the case, who have heard nothing of what the Judge has said about it, take their places, and a Common Jury is sworn in to try the case. While these proceedings are going on, the reporter will have started his report of the case by transcribing from his calendar the name of the prisoner and the offences for which he is indicted. He should remember that the word just used is the proper legal term to employ, while "charged" represents more accurately the position in the police court. The indictment is read to the prisoner, who usually returns the plea of "Not Guilty"; but, except in very important trials, where the prisoner pleads "Guilty" to some counts of the indictment and "Not Guilty" to others, this formality does not call for notice in the report. The names, however, of the counsel, for the prosecution and for the prisoner respectively, should be given in the introductory paragraph of the report.

The case is opened by the counsel for the Crown, all offences being regarded as committed against the King. The speech will give an outline of what is alleged against the prisoner, and it will be reported at greater or less length, according to the importance of the case. From this point, the reporter should devote himself to giving, within the limits of space at his disposal, a fair statement of the entire trial. He will find that counsel's opening speech may contain statements which are not borne out by the evidence of witnesses, and he should be careful to omit such passages

from his report. The evidence of the witnesses is usually written out in longhand, in the third person, as the case proceeds. Some of the testimony is important from the point of view of the newspaper report, while a good many witnesses tell stories which merely support the leading witness; it is usual simply to mention the names of such witnesses, and to say that they "corroborated." Care should be taken to indicate the testimony elicited in reply to the counsel on the other side; this is usually prefaced with the statement: "Cross-examined by Mr. ——; witness said, etc." The speech of the counsel for the defence must be given suitable space, and the statements of the prisoner himself (if he enters the witness-box) need to be carefully reported, and also any expressions of opinion by the Judge in reviewing the evidence in summing up to the jury. Unless a trial is reported verbatim, or nearly so, the reporter will find it quite possible to complete his longhand report by the time the jury have retired to consider their verdict. There are many necessary formalities during a trial which give the reporter ample time to complete his report. When the jury return with their verdict, this will be followed, if unfavourable to the prisoner, by a statement, which can be now given without prejudice to the trial just concluded, of any previous convictions. When he has added these particulars and the sentence, and described anything incidental, the reporter will be ready to take up the work of reporting the next case. But here we may pause to mention, incidentally, the fact that, under the law relating to criminal appeal, a complete shorthand note of all that is said, and of evidence given at every Assize trial, is recorded by an official note-taker, who follows the circuit of the Judge—another illustration of the extreme care taken to prevent miscarriage of justice.

The Nisi Prius Court.

While the Crown Court is sitting for the trials of prisoners, as described above, another Judge will be presiding in the Nisi Prius Court for the trial of civil actions. The cases

to be heard are very briefly indicated on a Cause List, of which the reporter will be able to secure a copy. It will, however, furnish him with no more information than the names of the plaintiffs and defendants, with an indication of the order in which the cases will come before the court. When the case has been called and the jury sworn, counsel for the plaintiff give particulars to the court of the nature of the action, and state generally the kind of evidence which will be called in support of it. At a later stage of the proceedings, counsel for the defendant will follow on similar lines. Work in the Nisi Prius Court is more difficult for the beginner than reporting in the Crown Court, and therefore none but reporters with a fair experience of legal proceedings should be entrusted with it. If the young reporter has spare time at his disposal, he would be well advised to attend the sittings and study the published reports thereon of his seniors. Civil actions tried in this court have to be made clear to the jury, and no reporter should possess less intelligence than the gentlemen in the box. But sometimes the course of an action is materially altered as the result of some legal point submitted to the Judge, and, if in doubt, the reporter should seek the assistance of one of the barristers interested, who will give the information with that courtesy which the Bar always manifests towards the Press. The evidence is reported in civil actions on very similar lines to those followed in the Criminal Court, and the summing up of the Judge to the jury is usually reported more or less fully, according to the importance of the case from the newspaper reader's point of view.

Quarter Sessions.

Courts of Quarter Sessions, for the trial of prisoners indicted for a variety of misdemeanours of a less serious character than those brought before the Judges at Assizes, are held, as their title indicates, four times a year. The procedure is exactly similar to that followed at Assizes, except that the head of the tribunal is the Recorder of a

borough, who is a barrister-at-law; or the Chairman of Quarter Sessions, a gentleman of position, who has had a legal training. In addition to the trials before the court and jury, appeals against decisions of the justices, sitting in the police courts, are heard at Quarter Sessions. As the entire proceedings take place with the assistance of the Bar, the reporter will find them usually straightforward and fairly simple.

Under the Criminal Appeal Act, an official shorthand writer is appointed to take a complete note of all the trials at Quarter Sessions, as in the case of Assize trials. The appointments are given to reporters of the Press, or to shorthand clerks and others who possess the needful skill.

County Courts.

There are, throughout the country, minor tribunals, presided over by a Judge, which are held in nearly every town, for the settlement of actions, for the trial of disputed claims, and the recovery of small debts. The Judges also adjudicate on matters relating to the administration of certain statutes, of which that dealing with workmen's compensation may be cited as an example. These courts are usually designated County Courts, but some ancient corporate towns have similar courts, which were created under Royal Charters, long before County Courts came into existence.

Unless he has had a legal training, the young reporter will find the reporting of County Courts by no means easy. The larger daily papers, it is true, devote but little space to such reports, and notice only cases of exceptional public interest; but most weekly papers deal rather fully with the proceedings at the County Courts, and the reporter usually spends a day or two every month in the court of His Honour Judge ——. Sometimes an entire day may be taken up in listening to a number of small claims and counter claims, the total amount involved often representing a quite inconsiderable sum; but these disputes have engaged the attention of Judge, solicitors—who usually practise in these

courts—and a small army of witnesses, and the reporter who is new to the work can hardly fail to be astonished at the acumen of the Judge in arriving at a just decision amid so much rank perjury on the part of the witnesses and such a considerable amount of legal ingenuity on behalf of their clients exhibited by the solicitors who appear. A few of the cases are heard with a jury, but in most instances His Honour decides on the evidence presented, as well as on the legal points involved. A good many applications come before the court, and are dealt with in an almost informal way by the Judge. He has perused beforehand the papers relating to the matter, and time is saved by a brief intimation of his decision to the legal representatives concerned. The reporter would be hopelessly at sea in attempting to report such a proceeding, because if he transcribed all that he actually heard, the public would derive no intelligible idea of what the matter was about. He must also not forget that he has no authority to publish anything which he does not actually hear in court. In such a case as we have just mentioned, his best course will be to obtain, from the chief clerk to the Registrar or from the solicitors concerned, a short statement of the nature of the application, as an introduction to the decision of His Honour, of which he will have taken a note.

Bankruptcy Courts.

Proceedings under the Bankruptcy law take place throughout England in association with the County Courts. The first intimation of a bankruptcy reaches the Press through the publication, in the *London Gazette*, of the fact that Receiving Orders have been made in the case of persons whose names, addresses, and occupations are fully set forth. Daily newspapers usually have the information, as to local bankruptcies, wired direct to them on the issue of the *Gazette* in London, but the conductors of weekly newspapers consult the reprint of the full list in *The Times*. When a bankruptcy has occurred, the reporter should make

inquiry at the office of the Official Receiver as to the date and hour of the statutory first meeting of creditors, over which the official just mentioned will preside, and submit a statement of the debtor's financial position. The public examination of the debtor will be held subsequently at a court fixed for a particular date, and presided over by the County Court Registrar. Many of the bankruptcy cases are of very slight public importance, while others deal with the financial difficulties of important individuals or firms. Sometimes the reports of such examinations will extend to no more than a paragraph ; in other cases, a long report of what the debtor said will be expected by the public. Special care is needed in preparing reports of the public examinations in bankruptcy, from the fact that the debtors are either ignorant concerning their liabilities, or are ready to throw the blame for their insolvency upon others. In important cases, both the debtor and the principal parties concerned are represented at the public examination, and any statements the debtor may make relative to the clients of the latter will form the subject of their questions ; but should allegations be made against persons not represented, the reporter should take care that he publishes nothing which appears to be of a doubtful character, about third parties.

Official Note-taking.

In many parts of the country, where professional shorthand writers do not practise, newspaper reporters have an opportunity of acting as official shorthand writers to the Bankruptcy Court. To a good verbatim note-taker, and one who has sufficient time to attend to the requirements of the Court, such work is attractive on account of the remuneration it brings. The note-taker is duly sworn by the Registrar, to give a true and faithful record of the questions and answers put and given during the inquiry. The debtor is usually first examined by the Official Receiver, and afterwards by solicitors representing particular creditors or groups of creditors. All that is uttered must be recorded with absolute

fullness and literal accuracy, and thus transcribed. A very short experience of insolvent debtors will impress on the official shorthand writer the fact that they do not usually answer frankly and fully the interrogatories addressed to them. In many cases, they either have not kept proper accounts, or have, in some mysterious way, got rid of documentary evidence which would assist the Court. In a few instances, they are disposed to question the accuracy of the shorthand writer's transcript of their statements, which they are required to sign. If this should happen, the official note-taker should appeal to the Registrar for his decision on the disputed transcript, if the point at issue is of material importance. Minor corrections by the debtor can, of course, be treated in accordance with their character. The official shorthand writer is expected to furnish the Court with a type-written transcript of his notes, and a few hints to those who take up this work for the first time may not be out of place.

The official note-taker should be careful to ascertain precisely on what size of paper his transcript should be made, and he should also get from the office of the Registrar the particular form of introduction and termination to be used in connection with the questions and answers. The following is a specimen of the kind of form used—

In the County Court of_____Holden at_____

In Bankruptcy

No.____of 19____

Re (name and address.)

Public Examination of the Debtor.

Before Mr. Registrar_____at the Court of_____ this_____day of_____19____

The above named debtor being sworn and examined at the time and place above-mentioned upon the several questions following being put and propounded to him gave the several answers thereto respectively following each question, that is to say—

Examined by the Official Receiver.

1. Q.
A.

These are the notes of the public examination referred to in the memo. of public examination of_____taken before me this _____day of_____19____.

_____

Registrar.

It should be the endeavour of the official shorthand writer to hand in his transcript at the office of the Registrar, for placing on the file, at the earliest possible time after the close of the proceedings. The public examination may be adjourned, and before the debtor makes his appearance again, the transcript will be carefully perused by the officials of the court and others. Certain bankruptcy stamps have to be affixed to the transcript and also to the allocatur (the document in which the shorthand writer sets forth his charges), and these details should be attended to personally by him.

In some Bankruptcy Courts, the private examination of the debtor is taken by an official shorthand writer, and this involves, of course, a much more considerable amount of note-taking and transcription than in the case of the public examination described above.

Courts-Martial.

Journalists who carry on their practice in military centres or naval ports gain an experience of the proceedings at courts-martial. The procedure at these courts differs materially from that followed in the courts established for dealing with civil delinquents. Where the inquiries involve the hearing of a considerable amount of evidence, time is saved by the employment of a service shorthand writer, but there is usually a large amount of routine observed: so that the reporter can, in most cases, write a fairly full longhand report during the sitting of the court. There is, however, a certain amount of inconvenience to the reporter resultant from service methods. The room in which the inquiry is held is kept empty until the members of the court have arrived and taken their seats, after which, the reporters, along with the public, are permitted to enter. The accused has the assistance of a legal "friend," while what may be termed the prosecution is conducted by a service officer. On every point submitted to the court, the officers forming it consult and decide, and, as they consult without leaving the room,

the court is cleared of everybody, until they have arrived at their decision. Such interruptions to the reporter's work may occur several times during a sitting. Many years ago, when naval courts-martial were held aboard one of the old "wooden walls" moored in a western port, the reporters, it is said, made application to the naval officers in court-martial assembled, for leave to have a little more accommodation in the shape of tables and seats. The room was promptly cleared in order that the court might consider and decide on the application! There is a minor description of courts-martial usually held before a single military officer, and resembling in general a police-court inquiry. The reporter, if he does not attend these, can obtain the needful particulars for a brief report from the orderly-room clerks.

CHAPTER X

REPORTING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

ALL journalists who are engaged in reporting work, except those employed on the staffs of the great London daily newspapers, find that the duty of attending the meetings of bodies responsible for local government in both town and country, makes a considerable demand on their time. And it is obvious, even to the casual newspaper reader, that reports of Council meetings occupy a large proportion of the space in all local newspapers. The young journalist will very soon discover that, although newspaper readers are not always keenly interested in the course of Imperial politics, they never cease to take a very alert interest in the proceedings of the body they have elected to fulfil the functions of local government. There are two very simple reasons for this: The first is that the health, the comfort, and even the amusements of the city, town, or village, are largely under the control of the local authority; and the second, that the judicious expenditure of the funds obtained from the ratepayers is a legitimate subject of watchful criticism.

County, District, and Parish Councils.

The reform and extension of local government which has been brought about within the last quarter of a century in England has, unquestionably, largely increased the work of newspaper reporters. Before that period, local government was represented in the towns by the Councils, and in the country by the Quarter Sessions, with various authorities created under different Acts of Parliament, and conducting the administration on what, for want of a better term, has been called the *ad hoc* principle. But from the passing of the Local Government Act of 1888, there has been a transformation in local administrative bodies, so that the whole

of England is covered by County Councils, Urban and Rural District, Borough, and Parish Councils. These respective bodies have not only had extensive powers conferred on them by Acts of Parliament, but have also absorbed older bodies, which were concerned in road maintenance, cemeteries, elementary and secondary education, and so forth. English local administration is now so comprehensive, that it provides a parish meeting at which any "village Hampden" has his chance of raising his voice in the public interest, and long-suffering reporters know only too well that he does not miss his opportunity. In the highest development of local government in the councils of our great cities and counties, some of our public men find a suitable scope for their energies, and find their way from the Council Chamber to the House of Commons and the Cabinet.

The proceedings of the various bodies elected for dealing with local government bear a family likeness, and are conducted on somewhat similar principles, the meetings of the entire council being usually held in chambers in which provision is made for the representatives of the Press, and accommodation provided for such of the public as care to attend. These councils are, in effect, local Parliaments. The proceedings are presided over by the Mayor, or an elected Chairman, and an official known as the Town Clerk, or the Clerk, invariably attends. An agenda, containing particulars of the business to be transacted, is usually sent to the local editors at the same time that it is issued to the members of the Council, and frequently reports from Committees of the Council are also issued with the agenda. The reporter who is new to the work should make a careful study of these documents, and also of the previous meetings of the Council reported in his newspaper. An acquaintance with local topography is almost indispensable to the journalist who would produce a satisfactory report, but this is a qualification with which his daily duties on the local Press will soon endow him. At the Council meeting itself, the reporter will find it needful to pay special attention to the remarks

of the Mayor and the Town Clerk, as he will soon discover that these functionaries control the debate, and respectively furnish information to the Council, on well established lines of public policy. It is of great advantage to the reporters when the Mayor, or other president of a Council, is a strong and tactful man, and keeps the discussion well within bounds. When speakers are closely limited to the subject under discussion, and not allowed to lapse into irrelevancies or personalities, it is far easier than when it is otherwise, to produce a businesslike report of a Council meeting. " Scenes " at Council meetings are not uncommon, though it must be confessed that they often seem very " childish-foolish " when recorded in cold print. But, of course, reporters, under stress of competition, or in order to supply the demand for sensational news, or, let it be whispered, to gratify councillors who " play to the gallery," have no option but to report these passages-at-arms. There is a very perceptible tendency on the part of many newspapers to report the speeches and even the " chatter " of the Council Chamber at appalling length. The reporter must, of course, follow his instructions, but, if he is not hampered by these, we think that he may best serve the public by judicious conciseness.

Difficulties of the Work.

The actual shorthand note-taking at meetings of Councils of all kinds is, on the whole, of a more difficult character than that in connection with ordinary political or other addresses A Council is a deliberative body, and when certain reports or resolutions have been submitted to its members, they proceed to debate and decide upon them. Unless a reporter has to supply a very full report, he will find that his best course will be to take a note of the actual proposals of successive speakers, with the heads of the arguments by which they are supported. He must carefully follow the course of the debate, and will often find that a number of the proposals have very little relevancy to the decision finally arrived at. Such parts of the debate can be much condensed in

transcribing, whilst suitable attention is paid to what turns out to be the more important part of the debate. The terms of the resolutions, which are written out by the proposers, are usually brief, and should be fully quoted. With regard to reports of Committees, these, if circulated beforehand, are often reproduced in the newspapers some days before the actual meeting; but, in other cases, they may be read to the Council for the first time at its meeting, and should be incorporated in the report at such length as may be in accordance with the usage of the newspaper for which the report is being prepared. One further point may be noticed in connection with Council reporting. There is a certain difficulty in assigning correctly short explanations or conversational observations to the actual speaker, among those sitting around the Council table. Reporters are usually willing to assist a novice by informing him of the names of speakers, and the assistance freely given by journalists to a new-comer is one of the most pleasing of the unwritten laws of professional etiquette; but the new-comer should ask for the information he requires at suitable times, and should, of course, spare no effort to acquaint himself as early as possible with the personalities and the voices of the members of the Council.

Committee Reporting.

In some cities there is such a keen demand for intelligence regarding the doings of the local legislators, that reporters attend and report, more or less fully, the principal Committees, and information is furnished at the Town Clerk's office relative to the proceedings at some Committees, to which it would be injudicious to admit reporters, such as the Watch Committee, for example. The position of reporters for the newspapers at Committee meetings is a somewhat delicate one. It is, no doubt, of importance to the ratepayers to know what the "spending Committees" are doing; but it is obvious that injudicious reporting might frustrate the very object for which negotiations are entrusted

to Committees, namely, that they may be conducted to a successful issue with that privacy which is impossible in open Council. It is usual either for the Chairman of the Committee to ask reporters not to take notice of certain portions of the proceedings, or to request their retirement at a certain stage of the meeting, when the remaining business is of a confidential character. The reporter needs a large amount of tact in carrying out the duties just indicated; but where the representatives of the different newspapers agree to a common course of action in regard to the non-reporting of certain matters, he will find his position more pleasant than where cut-throat competition prevails.

Local Government Board Inquiries.

Inquiries by Inspectors of the Local Government Board form an important feature in the class of reporting we are now considering. When a Corporation desires to raise a loan for some public works, or to promote a Bill in Parliament, there is a public inquiry into the matter by an Inspector of the Local Government Board. The Board takes care to bring the date, place, and purpose of the inquiry prominently before the ratepayers by the circulation of the public notices, which can hardly fail to meet the eye of such an observant person as a newspaper reporter should be. Sometimes such inquiries are almost formal, and occupy but a short time. On other occasions, the object of the inquiry is one of great local importance, and there is strenuous opposition to the proposals. In these cases, the Inspector brings with him a staff of professional shorthand writers; and a verbatim report of the evidence, in the form of questions and answers, is printed at the close of each day's proceedings for the use of the parties. When an inquiry assumes this importance, a newspaper will make adequate provision for reporting it by having two or three reporters in attendance.

CHAPTER XI

REPORTING CONTESTED ELECTIONS, COMPANY MEETINGS, PUBLIC DINNERS, ETC.

When a General Election is believed to be imminent, the reporter finds that there is a very perceptible increase in political speech-making. The party organisations arrange "demonstrations" at which actual or prospective candidates for Parliamentary honours address the constituency, and their remarks are usually reported at considerable length in the newspapers. At last the fateful day arrives when every journal in the land announces, in its boldest type, the "Dissolution of Parliament." The reporter, who may have been hard at work for some time in reporting the political war of words, now breathes a sigh of relief at the thought that the period of time during which a contested election can last is strictly limited by statute. Five days after a Dissolution is the earliest, and eight days the latest time at which a borough election can follow. For county elections, there is a much wider limit of time, and more than a fortnight may elapse before voting takes place. As soon as a Government appeals to the country, the candidates issue their addresses to the electors; and the journalist should make it his business carefully to read those which are issued by all the candidates in his own constituency, and also those of the different party leaders.

Preliminaries.

In borough constituencies, the Mayor, and, in county constituencies, the High Sheriff is the Returning Officer, who is responsible for all the official arrangements connected with the election. The Returning Officer gets his mandate to act in the shape of the Writ issued from the Crown Office. This reaches him through the post, and the reporter should

inquire as to its arrival and ascertain the dates fixed for the nomination and the polling respectively. On the appointed day, the Returning Officer sits, at a place and time announced, to receive nominations ; and copies of these documents, so far as the candidate's name and description, and the names of his proposers and supporters are concerned, are secured by the reporter for publication in his newspaper. It sometimes happens that an objection is made to a nomination paper, particulars of which require to be fully stated ; but, as a rule, the nomination of candidates is an entirely formal business.

Speech-making and "Heckling."

From the Dissolution down to the day of polling, the candidates are incessantly engaged in the delivery of political speeches at every street-corner in the constituency. An arrangement, which has a good deal to commend it, is one by which a particular reporter is assigned to follow and report one particular candidate. By this plan, it is possible for the reporter to avoid repetition in his reports of a candidate's oft-repeated declarations of political faith. He will also take careful note of the "heckling" to which the candidate is subjected by voters, and give a succinct account of the candidate's opinions or promises. For the larger meetings in the principal public buildings, the paper will be represented by two or three reporters. A contested election presupposes that at least two rival candidates are on the scene, but there may be more. The flood tide of political oratory to which all the candidates contribute is so considerable, that no newspaper could possibly report fully the speeches on both sides. It is usual, therefore, for a newspaper to pay special attention to reporting the candidate whose political views it supports, while the candidate on the other side is reported with comparative brevity. The speech-making at a General and a By-Election respectively differs in one important respect. At a General Election, every candidate is fully occupied in his own constituency ; but at

a By-Election, held while Parliament is in existence, candidates receive the countenance and support of prominent M.P.'s. Numbers of these gentlemen make their appearance in the constituency and address meetings. From their importance in the political world, the newspapers usually report their observations at some length.

The Polling Day.

When the polling-day arrives, speech-making is practically over, or, at any rate, the newspapers do not trouble to record eleventh-hour oratory, which can only appear in print together with the declaration of the poll. And candidates are usually otherwise occupied than in making speeches. The reporter is now called on to describe the various polling stations, with lists of the officers in charge of each. He has also to record the movements of the candidates in the constituency, and to mention who were their active supporters, with particulars of the local committee rooms, and who lent motor-cars or carriages, or in other ways did voluntary work for the cause. In these descriptive efforts he is usually called upon to mention only the work of the political party which his journal represents, with, it may be, incidental references to the doings of the other side. In collecting this information, he will gain much assistance from the political agents. There is usually brisk excitement, but nothing else, associated with the polling day. Spectacular effects are sometimes attempted, which are received, as a rule, with perfect good temper by English crowds on election day.

Declaration of the Poll.

In the past, reporters have often experienced difficulty, and even obstruction, in their endeavours to furnish the public, at the earliest possible moment, with the figures giving the result of the poll. But, nowadays, election officials and journalists understand each other better. Instead of having to secure the figures as they are announced to a turbulent and noisy crowd, Returning Officers arrange for

the accommodation of the reporters, who are given the momentous figures, and are enabled to dispatch them to their offices or to the telegraph office with expedition and comfort. The counting of the votes, which precedes the Declaration, is usually witnessed only by the parties immediately concerned or officially appointed; but the journalist can readily secure information of any sensational incidents which may have marked these proceedings, and also particulars of the vote of thanks which it is usual for the candidates to propose to the Returning Officer. Immediately after the poll is declared, the successful and unsuccessful candidates respectively make short addresses to the crowds of supporters assembled outside their particular headquarters. Reporters assigned to take these speeches should secure positions as close as possible to the candidates, and with the least delay; otherwise they may only be in time to see the assemblage dispersing.

Municipal and other local council elections are conducted on similar lines to Parliamentary, the principal difference being the much larger number of candidates for wards and divisions. Much less reporting work is involved, though at times unusual public interest may be shown in the addresses of candidates for the Town Council, when the reporter is, of course, called upon to give their speeches to the public. The election of Mayor on the 9th November in each year—when speeches are delivered by proposer, seconder, and others—is fully reported.

Revision of Voters' Lists.

The Revising Barrister's Court, held annually in the Autumn, is intimately associated with electioneering work. The Revising Barrister is engaged in bringing the register of voters up to date by making all needful removals and additions. The party agents attend in support of the claims put forward by persons who are believed to hold particular party views, and the agents call witnesses and address the Court. The duty of attending the proceedings is a tedious

one, but the reporter is sometimes rewarded with interesting decisions on points of franchise law; he does not, of course, attempt to report the bulk of the claims, which possess no public interest. Directly after the revision is finished, each of the party agents compiles figures showing the gain which his own party has secured from the revision. As both electioneering statisticians cannot possibly be correct, the reporter usually publishes the figures supplied to him by the agent of the party which his newspaper favours.

Company Meetings.

Meetings of commercial companies of all kinds, but usually those with limited liability, are, in many cases, attended by reporters. There are, however, numerous important companies which do not admit reporters to their meetings, and the Press cannot claim any right to admission. In cases where company meetings are thrown open to the Press, the reporter would do well to inform himself beforehand as to the report submitted to the meeting for adoption. This is a printed document circulated some time previously among the shareholders, and, if it has not been sent to the newspaper office, the secretary will readily supply a copy. Any resolutions to be proposed can also be obtained in print before the meeting. The principal feature in a company meeting is the speech of the chairman, which is often delivered from a typewritten manuscript. It contains carefully-weighed statements relative to the business and prospects of the company; and, whether he gives a full report or an abridgment, the reporter will usually find it advantageous to compile it from the manuscript. The speeches of shareholders which follow need to be reported with much discrimination. They are sometimes very acrimonious, and represent the directorate as little better than a den of thieves. The chairman of the company is, however, usually a personage well able to take care of himself, and, if the allegations are reported, especial care should be taken to record fully the chairman's reply.

Public Dinners.

Attendance at public dinners, and less frequently at luncheons, breakfasts, and teas, forms a not unimportant section of journalistic work. An invitation to the function is addressed by the promoters to the editor of the newspaper, it being understood that it will be used by a reporter, who will attend to chronicle the proceedings. At all the more important dinners evening dress is *de rigueur*, while at luncheons morning dress is expected. Present-day reporters are careful to observe the conventions in the matter of dress. Whatever the character of the repast, the speaking, in which the interest of the Press is enlisted, takes place after the meal. The speeches are delivered in accordance with the printed toast-list. Reporting after-dinner oratory is not always easy, from the fact that the reporters are not invariably given seats at which they can properly hear the principal speakers, and there is a distracting buzz of conversation, with the clatter inseparable from the enjoyment of the dessert. Nor is this all; the temptation to partake too freely of the wines has been fatal to many a promising journalistic career. Where there is much strenuous work in after-dinner note-taking and transcribing, the total abstainer has a great advantage.

CHAPTER XII

DESCRIPTIVE AND NARRATIVE REPORTING

THE most casual glance through the pages of a newspaper will reveal to anyone who bestows intelligent thought on the matter, the fact that the ability to write good descriptive prose, and the possession of some knowledge of a vast variety of subjects, are essential qualifications for the successful discharge of the duties of a reporter. It is only by experience that the young journalist can acquire that valuable skill and knowledge which will enable him to write acceptable reports of occurrences as widely differing from one another as a railway accident and a fashionable wedding, or a destructive fire and a flower show—to mention only a few of the events which are chronicled in the newspaper. The beginner will be well advised to bestow some attention to the acquirement of the necessary skill for good descriptive and narrative journalistic effort. This class of work calls for the exercise of more ability than is needed to report speeches and addresses of different kinds. The character of a descriptive report must always depend largely on the skill of the reporter in securing the necessary facts; on his ability to use them in the composition he prepares for the Press; and on his tact and good sense in the use of matter which is relevant and interesting, and, so far as he can make it, accurate. In this chapter we propose to deal generally with the subject: first, with a view to pointing out to the young reporter how he can qualify himself in descriptive reporting; and, secondly, to indicate some of the sources of information from which the facts necessary for descriptive reports must be secured by newspaper reporters.

The Preliminary Qualification.

The essential preliminary qualification for all narrative and descriptive work for the Press is the ability to write the

English language correctly and clearly. Every sentence in a descriptive report should convey to the mind of the reader an absolutely clear idea about the event which forms the subject of the notice. The language used should resemble, as closely as possible, the ordinary, everyday speech of educated people. No attempt should be made to introduce "fine writing"—by which we mean an inflated and unnatural style, such as is never seen except in the columns of some obscure newspapers. This kind of writing is tedious to the man of business who desires to get at the heart of the matter, and is unpalatable to all who have any literary taste. The advice of a great master of English, who told aspirants for literary distinction, "Spin your yarn in simple language," may be suitably quoted in this connection. It is quite possible to give a pen picture of some striking event in language as simple as that employed by Defoe, or Bunyan, or John Bright. In newspaper composition, obsolete words should be carefully avoided, and only terms which occur in current English speaking and writing should be employed. This advice is offered lest the reporter should be tempted to follow the style affected by some modern writers, in which a good many words are to be found that no longer pass current. The other extreme must also be avoided, and slang phrases severely let alone. There is a very real danger of the debasement of English by the vast amount of *argot* which is introduced into the descriptive reports in many widely circulated journals. Extreme illustrations of this fact can be seen in certain American journals, whose reporters write in a jargon which is absolutely unintelligible to the average Englishman. One other fault of style should not be overlooked. The descriptive reporter should be especially careful not to use technical terms having a limited meaning in the description of everyday occurrences; for example, the word "venue" is a legal term in relation to the locality in which certain alleged acts took place, and "changing the venue" is a phrase occasionally heard in actions at law. But the employment of this phrase to

indicate the alteration of the place of meeting of a coursing match or a public tea is obviously inaccurate and, when the phrase is introduced on every possible occasion, it becomes positively tiresome to the newspaper reader.

Stock Phrases.

There is, of course, a great amount of descriptive reporting in which the use of stock phrases cannot be avoided. It must be remembered that the bulk of journalistic work has, of necessity, to be done at high pressure. A reporter may spend the best part of a day in collecting his facts out of doors: he will jot down in his note-book things he has observed, and he will record in the same place the statements of persons in a position to furnish him with useful information. He has then either to return post-haste to the office or to secure a chair and table in an hotel or telegraph office, and forthwith write, as speedily as he can, a descriptive account of the event he has witnessed. In work of this kind, stock phrases are most helpful; they readily occur to the writer, and he knows that the reader will be absolutely certain as to his meaning. But the reporter must be careful of two things: He must not compound his descriptive article entirely of stock phrases, and he must take care that those which he uses are employed correctly.

The Arrangement and Statement of Facts.

At the beginning of his efforts at descriptive writing, the young reporter, having secured his facts, should give careful thought as to the best method of their presentation. In some instances, it will be found most effective to narrate what happened in the order of time. In describing a fire, for example, the story may very well begin with the discovery of the outbreak, proceeding thence to an account of its further progress and the efforts of the fire brigade, and concluding with an estimate of the damage and a statement relative to the insurance. In other instances, a different method of treatment must necessarily be adopted. Let us

suppose that a gale has wrought widespread havoc ; in this case, the descriptive reporter will classify the information he obtains from many sources, so that the reader can see at once the full extent of the damage in each particular district or town. In some descriptive reports, such as those relating to the opening of new buildings, the reporter will often find it possible to incorporate in his report a description of the building supplied by the architect. Assistance of this kind is, in most cases, readily given by those responsible for the construction of public works of all kinds, and without such help the reporter will obviously find it difficult, if not impossible, to furnish the public with accurate and useful data. In many classes of descriptive work, the facts should be obtained from the officials of various kinds who are responsible for the undertakings ; but in regard to expressions of opinion on the quality or characteristics of articles exhibited at shows and so forth, the reporter must be largely dependent on his own judgment and on such guidance as he can obtain from the opinion of experts who happen to be present.

Practice in Newspaper Composition.

The young journalist who desires to make himself proficient in the class of work we are describing, or who would even become what is known as a good "all round" reporter, is advised to begin the study and practice of newspaper composition, essay writing, and so forth, from the moment he settles down to work on the Press. He should study good models. For this purpose, the descriptive reports given in the leading provincial daily newspapers are to be preferred to those which appear in the London morning journals. The Metropolitan newspapers very frequently employ brilliant literary men for descriptive work, and their narratives are more often impressionist sketches than careful records of facts. On the other hand, the great provincial dailies invariably furnish ably written descriptions, in which facts and statements of importance are marshalled in their

proper order, while trivial detail, which is too often a tiresome feature of the small local weeklies, is avoided. For practice in descriptive reporting, the junior will soon find a good many openings in association with his daily work. If he is given the opportunity of submitting local notes, or similar matter, for consideration by the editor, he should embrace every chance of exercising his pen on this description of original work. There are many essay competitions announced in association with popular periodicals. He should endeavour to compete in as many of these as he can. In all his literary efforts, he should be inspired by the thought that he may one day become another Jerome, Barrie, or Kipling. During his novitiate, the young journalist should be always on the look out for the opportunity to scribble something original and to get his writing into print.

There are a good many works which may prove helpful to the aspirant who desires to do original journalistic work. He should, however, take care to study only the latest. It should be his aim to acquire facility in the use of terse, present-day English, and, therefore, the works of authors, such as Blair and Todd, though they possess sterling excellences, are not to be implicitly followed as guides for English, as it is spoken and written to-day. Much valuable guidance on matters of taste or accuracy will be found in *The King's English Abridged* (Oxford University Press, 1s. 6d.). Questions of vocabulary, syntax, meaning, punctuation, and literary graces are discussed, with examples of erroneous treatment by present-day writers and journals, and the whole work is deserving of several perusals by the journalistic aspirant. Nor should he neglect to have always at hand the *Authors' and Printers' Dictionary*, by F. Howard Collins (Oxford University Press, 1s. net). This handy volume furnishes guidance on many points not touched on in ordinary English dictionaries, and specially meets the needs of all who write for the Press. If at a loss for the right word or phrase when engaged in original composition, a reference to *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*

(Longmans, Green & Co., 2s. 6d. net), will usually afford the needful aid. This invaluable work contains an immense collection of words and phrases classified and arranged so as to facilitate the expression of ideas and assist in literary composition.

CHAPTER XIII

SPECIALISATION AND CRITICISM

As this book is designed for the guidance of those who are beginning their journalistic career, the objection may be offered that the discussion of the higher branches of newspaper work, on which we are about to enter, is beyond their scope. But we are not of this opinion, and for two reasons: In the first place, the junior should, very early in his career, make up his mind that, in addition to qualifying himself to become a good "all-round man," who can be relied on to do effectively whatever is entrusted to him, he will also fit himself to perform some special branch of newspaper work. In the second place, an introduction, however slight, to the higher walks of journalism, is most useful to all who are engaged in any capacity on a newspaper staff, even though they may not aspire to such work.

Journalists with Special or Technical Knowledge.

If the newspaper reader reflects for a moment, the conclusion will be forced upon him that large portions of the news contained in every journal must, of necessity, be contributed by men having a special and intimate knowledge of the particular industry, or institution, or pastime, about which they write. The average reporter does very useful work in recording speeches and in preparing accounts of a wide range of ordinary happenings, but, if a landsman, he would find himself entirely nonplussed if ordered to report a yacht-race; or he may have a good knowledge of cricket, and yet be entirely unacquainted with the technicalities of horse-racing; and it would be no reflection on his attainments if the journalist possessed no aptitude for musical, dramatic, or artistic criticism.

A short experience in a newspaper office will reveal to the

tyro the fact that there are certain kinds of special work, apart from the reporting of meetings, which the ordinary members of the staff are expected to undertake, while there are others which are always entrusted to those possessing the needful technical knowledge.

Reporting Outdoor Sports.

Within recent years there is no subject which has demanded such a large increase of attention from newspaper conductors as outdoor sports. These pastimes are of the most varied description, but there are two on which every junior reporter should be sufficiently well-informed to write his own reports of the matches—we refer to cricket and football. As these games are generally played during one's time at school, the young journalist should find little difficulty in reporting such matters. He will probably be able to attend a few matches with a senior member of the staff, and he should take especial heed to the practical hints he can derive on such occasions, which are far more useful than anything that can be written on the subject. He will discover that for some information he is dependent on the secretaries and other officials, and the exercise of a little tact, and inquiries made when these officials are not actively engaged in the discharge of some responsible duty, will secure him the information he desires. In reporting other sports, such as lawn-tennis or golf, he will find it necessary, where his paper does not employ specialists, to secure the information he requires from the secretary or from some lover of the game who can be relied on to furnish impartial and accurate information. There are some sports which, although attracting vast attendances, may not often fall within the individual experience of the reporter. Among these, horse-racing takes a leading place. It is a relief to the journalist not experienced in such work when his paper avails itself of the report of the races supplied by one of the agencies which has an experienced sporting journalist present at every meeting of importance. But the local reporter

may often find himself called upon to record small meetings for flat-racing or steeplechases, and in these cases there are several sources of information on which he must rely. There is often no printed card, and all the usual particulars of the horses running, with their jockeys, etc., should be secured as early as possible before the race from the secretary or clerk of the course. There is generally among the betting fraternity a leading bookmaker present, who will readily supply what are known to racing people as the "starting prices." The race itself the reporter must describe to the best of his ability with the assistance of a pair of field-glasses, and the distances by which the winners were ahead of competitors should be given on the official authority of the judge, obtained directly after the race. If there are any objections, care should be taken to secure the exact official decision. In the matter of general introduction to the report of a race meeting, newspapers differ widely both as to length and style of treatment, and the junior reporter should ascertain what is expected in this direction before setting out to fulfil his engagement. A word of advice is addressed to the young reporter who finds himself, in the discharge of his duties, attending race meetings and other gatherings at which betting is prevalent. He is recommended to follow the example of the most enthusiastic sportsman the writer ever knew, who used to boast that, during a long journalistic career, he had never bet a single penny on any of the races he had reported —from the Derby downwards.

Reporting Shows and Exhibitions.

Shows of live stock of all descriptions—horses, cattle, dogs, cats, poultry, cage-birds, and other domesticated creatures—will be encountered by the newspaper reporter in the course of his career; while shows of produce of all kinds, from mangel-wurzels to hot-house grapes, will periodically claim his attention. As in sports, so in shows, the reporter cannot hope to have expert knowledge of every variety of pastime or pursuit. He must be largely dependent on the friendly

assistance of experts, and experience will enable him to use the data with which they furnish him to the best advantage. The journalist has an excellent opportunity of forming a discriminating opinion as to the respective merits of shows as soon as he has attended several events of the same kind. If he cannot, with such experience and with the ready assistance of friendly experts, produce a really informing notice of an ordinary show of the description indicated, then we can only say that he has missed his vocation. In connection with shows of all descriptions, local newspapers usually publish the full prize lists, and the collection of the prize-winners' names and other particulars usually entails considerable labour. The arrangements at shows differ so widely, and the judges discharge their duties in such a variety of fashions, that very little useful guidance can be offered to the junior. In shows of considerable size, and where the copy of the prize list has to be in the hands of the printers at the earliest possible moment, it is a good arrangement to have one reporter attending solely to the prize list, while a colleague devotes himself to the descriptive account. A great saving of time is effected when the reporter writes out beforehand the particulars of the various classes in blank, filling in the names of the prize-winners as they are announced by the judges. In dealing, as we have done above, with sports and shows, the reader should remember that no attempt has been made to notice every variety, but only some of the most popular.

Musical Criticism.

Criticism of all descriptions—from grand opera to an amateur concert, and from a new picture gallery to a display of students' drawings—falls to the lot of the journalist. He may not be greatly interested in musical comedy or *revue*, but he will probably be called on very frequently to describe or criticise both these and the more serious displays of histrionic art. Criticism of public performances falls, broadly speaking, into two main divisions, which on large

daily newspapers form the special provinces of the musical and dramatic critics respectively. But on a great many journals this description of criticism forms part of the duties of the ubiquitous "all-round man." In the department of newspaper work, including criticism of the fine arts, the junior reporter would do well to specialise. Music is probably the most generally cultivated art which is the subject of public display. If the young journalist has a natural aptitude for music, he should cultivate it, and acquire all the knowledge he can of its practice and history. Without a certain amount of personal skill, accompanied by special knowledge, he should avoid, as far as possible, the task of musical criticism. With it, and with assistance derived from intercourse with musical people, he should be able to convey to his readers an attractive impression of the musical performances of professional vocalists and instrumentalists. Amateur musical performances will often call for notice, but the junior should be cautioned against a not uncommon failing. The efforts of musical amateurs are usually exercised in the furtherance of some deserving object, and, for this reason, are worthily entitled to commendatory notice and to such praise as their skill merits. Hostile criticism should never be indulged in when noticing amateur effort; but, on the other hand, the reporter should not lavish praise on such performances in language which would be extravagant if applied to the singing of a *prima donna*.

Dramatic Criticism.

Dramatic criticism does not require the technical training, without which musical criticism is of little value. The actor appeals directly to our emotions, and the play has a story to tell which can be understood by everyone who can see and hear. But, although everyone can give his own impressions or criticism of the drama, newspaper criticism —if it is to be worth any hing—should be that of an expert. It cannot be said, however, that all dramatic critics contribute to the columns of their papers notices which are

either fair to actor or author, or of value to the public desirous of guidance as to the merits of a new piece. From various motives, some dramatic critics have an animus against particular dramatists, and they sometimes appear to nourish a similar feeling against particular actors; and so the brilliant critic writes a notice which demonstrates what a clever man he is, while it also insinuates that the author is quite the reverse, and, just as he is completing his allotted space, the critic appears to remember that certain capable actors and actresses took part in the representation, and casually mentions the fact with a few tepid words of praise. This is the kind of notice which the young journalist should avoid as a model. If he is called upon to notice a new play, he should endeavour to convey to his readers some idea of the character and scope of the piece, and, if the author is already known in the theatrical world, it will be useful to recall the work by which he is best known. The story of the play should be indicated rather than described literally, and the great "situations" should be specially noticed. If the play has a subtly worked-out plot, the reporter should not be at the pains to describe its development and climax as if he were writing a story. He does not serve the theatre-going public by giving them the whole story of the drama and thus depriving them of the pleasure arising from witnessing the unfolding of the plot for themselves. Experience, as in other directions, may, in time, make the journalist a judicious critic; but, until he really has some skill in appraising the merits of actors, he would do well to cultivate a certain judicious reserve. Theatrical notices for the morning newspapers have always to be written at a very high pressure, and the journalist will find it necessary to cultivate a ready style of composition, in order to write a notice at all within the limited time at his disposal after the curtain falls. Plays are occasionally produced which the journalist feels that he cannot conscientiously praise. From a long experience, we are of opinion that the "slating" of such performances is not the wisest course.

It is far better simply to chronicle, in the briefest terms possible, the fact that a certain play is being performed, leaving the public to draw its own conclusions from the brevity of the notice.

Literary Reviewing.

Another description of special work which the reporter can obtain in some offices, if he possesses literary tastes—although it may be said to appertain more particularly to the editorial staff—is the reviewing of books and magazines. By reviewing, we mean, of course, something very different from the selection and stringing together of extracts from a book, or " picking out the plums," as the practice is termed. A real review of a book should follow from a careful reading of its contents, from which the reviewer is enabled to get a clear idea of its purpose, and to form an opinion as to its particular value as an addition to English literature. Provided that the book does not deal with the politics or problems of the day, the reviewer should approach the work with an impartial mind ; but he should always remember that his chief duty is to the reader, and that the object of a review is to enable the public to judge whether a work is worthy of purchase.

A Word of Advice.

In concluding our remarks on specialisation and criticism, we desire to emphasise the motive which has inspired us. We have been anxious to demonstrate that a certain amount of specialisation forms a part of ordinary journalistic work, and that this often varies in character according to the district served by the newspaper, or the special features which find a place in its columns. But there is a wider field of specialised work in journalism, and some particular department of this should be cultivated by all ambitious newspaper men from the outset of their career : because it not only gives additional reputation to the journalist, but also enables him to increase the income he derives from the pursuit of his calling.

CHAPTER XIV

INTERVIEWING

THE interview is distinctly a feature of modern journalism, and has been introduced in the newspapers of this country within the last thirty years. Like some other innovations which have marked the recent history of the British Press, it came to us from America. But the publication of interviews has not become so general, nor has the practice been so seriously abused as it is almost every day in Transatlantic journalism. In this country, when a newspaper publishes an interview with a public man, great care is taken by the journalist to make it an authoritative and trustworthy record of the utterance of the individual who has granted him the interview. If the interview is declined, or if for some other reason it does not take place, or if the person interviewed is unable or unwilling to answer the questions put to him, no British journalist would for a moment think of inventing statements or of publishing matter which was never uttered by the person to whom it is attributed. But the American journalist regularly adopts this practice, and it is this fact, more than anything else, which has tended to discredit a very interesting feature of present-day journalistic enterprise.

Interviewing an Essential Part of Journalism.

In a general sense, the practice of interviewing in connection with newspaper work is by no means new. A considerable proportion of the matter used in descriptive and narrative reporting is obtained as the result of interviews with a number of people who are able to furnish information regarding the event with which the reporter is dealing. In some instances, experiences are recorded, or facts stated, on the authority of the person who made them ; but, in the majority of cases, information thus acquired by the reporter

is worked up in the production of his own report. The average journalist, therefore, who has gained some experience in the everyday duties of his craft possesses, at least, one indispensable qualification as an interviewer, namely, that of knowing how to approach all kinds of people with a view to eliciting their opinions or testimony on matters of current interest. He has also, as we shall see, other advantages over some of those who, without a practical journalistic training, have engaged in interviewing.

Definition of an "Interview."

While it is hardly necessary to define an interview in the sense in which the word is used to describe a contribution to a newspaper, a brief definition will, perhaps, make our discussion of the art of interviewing more intelligible. An interview is a statement made by a public man on a question of the day, or a story related by some individual who is brought into special prominence as the witness of some striking event. The interview is sought by the journalist, whose account of the questions he put and the answers he received makes up the interview.

The Procedure for an "Interview."

The preliminary step in interviewing is to obtain the consent of the person to be interviewed to meet the journalist. This may be done either by writing a polite note to the individual, or by making a call upon him and sending in one's card in the usual way. At this initial stage of the proceedings, the journalist discovers very soon that there is a great difference in the readiness or otherwise of people to be interviewed. Many public men who hold official positions, and many officials of public bodies, absolutely decline to make known what the reporter desires to publish in the form of an interview. Consideration for their colleagues on the one hand, and for those they serve on the other hand, tends to make interviewing in such cases impossible. But people who are free from the considerations we have

indicated will, as a rule, readily express their views, so that if the reporter had the time he could fill his paper with interviews with those who appreciate the value of newspaper publicity.

Importance of Tact.

Most journalists, it can be safely assumed, have acquired a certain amount of tact in approaching people of all kinds on behalf of their newspapers. This quality is especially important to the interviewer. Careful attention to the idiosyncracies of the person indicated is an important ingredient in interviewing work. If the journalist is not something of a mind reader, it is possible that he will not achieve success in some kinds of interviews. A great deal, of course, depends on the subject-matter of the interview. There are some things about which people will talk freely; there are others about which they feel constraint and, unless very judiciously approached, cannot be induced to communicate opinions or information. A great part of the art of interviewing consists in overcoming such obstacles where they exist.

The Journalist's Preparation for Interviewing.

No journalist should attempt any important interview without a certain amount of preparation. Such preparation should take the form of discovering all he can concerning the person he proposes to interview. He should look up the individual's record in *Who's Who*, or some other work of contemporary biography. He should then acquaint himself, as well as he can, with the particular matter on which the conversation is to take place, and he should prepare a number of questions to put to the person interviewed. It does not follow that he will be able, or that it may prove desirable, to ask all these questions, but they will prove most useful as a basis for the conversation. Set questions cannot always be put, because the answers of the persons interviewed may render some of them either inopportune or

needless. Other questions will occur to the interviewer which he will desire to put instead, and ready resource in doing this is one of the most valuable attainments which he can possess.

Value of Shorthand Ability.

The trustworthy character of an interview depends, to a large extent, on the skill with which the speaker's words are transmitted to the public. It must have occurred to readers that shorthand ability is an important qualification for an interviewer, and this is, in our opinion, emphatically true. Some acquaintance with the disputes which have arisen over published interviews, and the disclaimers which the persons interviewed have occasionally made, reveal the fact that it is the work of the non-shorthand interviewer which is most frequently complained about. There are, no doubt, journalists possessing such a well-trained memory that they can reproduce the substance of an interview without the aid of notes. But, even with the assistance of a good memory, it is not possible to reproduce the distinctive characteristics of a person's utterance, and the interview will be in the words and style of the interviewer rather than of the individual interviewed. There is, further, a more serious blemish in memory interviews. It is almost impossible for the interviewer to express the views of another person without a certain amount of bias, and, when the interviewer is one who thinks strongly on the subject, he is apt to colour the interview very largely with his own views. The ordinary journalist who uses shorthand, and has had a considerable experience in interviewing for reporting purposes, is usually free from these defects, and will always produce—other things being equal—the best interviews.

Higher Qualifications for the Task.

On what may be termed the higher qualifications for interviewing, a few observations may be offered. A pleasant and ingratiating manner, and one which inspires confidence, is

of the greatest importance in the interviewer. We have already mentioned the necessity for tact; it is sometimes needful to exercise patience and self-restraint in dealing with the person interviewed. And much depends on securing an interview in suitable environment. In his own particular sanctum and enjoying his favourite "smoke," an interviewed person will often furnish a far better story than in unfamiliar surroundings. We remember on one occasion being at the pains to board a vessel in the Channel on which a distinguished Englishman was returning to his native land after valuable experiences in one of our self-governing colonies. When approached in his cabin, he was so irascible, and expressed himself so freely on the subject of inopportune newspaper enterprise, that the prospect of any interview at all for publication appeared remote; but, an hour later, when seated in the smoking-room of an hotel on shore, and surrounded by congenial friends, this gentleman, while puffing his familiar "briar," furnished an admirable interview, which was widely copied by various newspapers after its appearance in the journal to which it was contributed. This anecdote will serve to illustrate one of the special difficulties of interviewing. In order to be successful, the interviewer himself must be gifted with ready resource and stenographic skill above the average. He needs to be able to take notes and watch his subject at the same time. He must possess a ready eye for taking in surroundings and literary skill for conveying a pen-picture of the scene of the interview. It is well, when time permits, to submit a proof to the person interviewed; but, if this is not possible, it is a wise precaution to read over one's notes with a view to having their accuracy confirmed before the interview closes.

CHAPTER XV

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE AND TELEGRAPHIC REPORTING

"OUR Special Correspondent" was once a phrase to conjure with in association with journalistic enterprise; but, to-day, the special correspondent, whether at home or abroad, does not appear to occupy the position he once did in the newspaper world. Without question, men of as much ability as any who preceded them are sent out to represent the great newspapers, but they do not now have the opportunity of being the first to transmit exclusive intelligence which thrills the whole country or even the world. Two causes have mainly contributed to lessen the prestige of the special correspondent. The first is the very strict control now exercised by governments, engaged in warlike operations, over the various methods of electrical communication, whether by cable or wireless. The commanders in the field take especial care that their own official messages have precedence of all others when news of importance is given to the world. Archibald Forbes would no longer be able to send to his paper the result of the battle of Ulundi long before any other news of the event reached this country; nor would Bennet Burleigh be able to repeat his famous *coup* after the victory of Tel-el-Kebir. Since those days, the Military Censor, the closing of field telegraph offices during an action, and exclusion from the front, have done much to check the enterprise of the war correspondent. In the fields of exploration and discovery, a second cause has operated against the prestige of the special correspondent. Explorers in the present day act as their own chroniclers. Of this, the recent expeditions to the South Pole are illustrations. The whole of the thrilling story of the two expeditions to the South Pole reached the world through the accounts transmitted by the exploring parties. It does not seem likely that any special correspondent of the future will have the magnificently good

fortune of Henry Stanley in giving to the world tidings of the long-lost explorer Livingstone, as the result of an expedition to the heart of the Dark Continent projected by the *New York Herald.*

The Selection of the "Special Correspondent."

The "Special Correspondent" is invariably an eminent journalist or author retained by one of the great London or provincial daily newspapers to represent it on some occasion of unusual importance, or to contribute to its columns articles on some subject of public concern with which the writer is specially qualified to deal. As a rule, the conductors of newspapers make careful provision that their special correspondents shall have full credentials and be formally recognised by the authorities with which they will come in contact. It has been said that the special correspondent of a great daily newspaper is sent on his mission with the pay of an ambassador, and that he exercises far more influence than the diplomatist. This is undoubtedly true, for the properly-equipped special correspondent, when sent abroad, needs a retinue of interpreters and servants, and is often obliged to have a travelling equipment of horses or other beasts of burden. He has frequently to dispense hospitality as lavishly as the surroundings permit, and, to effect his mission, he has not only to create a favourable impression, but to exercise great suavity and tact in securing information relative to some historical event which is occurring before him. It often happens that important news has to be well paid for, and the special correspondent needs to be liberally supplied with money or its equivalent. There is a large amount of special correspondence which the journalist must, of necessity, perform without being accredited in any way. Suddenly arising events, and even events which have been announced for some time, are often dealt with by special correspondents under very short notice from the editor. So suddenly have many special correspondents left our shores for a foreign destination, that we can only

suppose that these versatile journalists keep their kit ready packed to leave for the seat of war, or other centre of interest, at a moment's notice.

Need of Resourcefulness.

The conditions under which the special correspondent is called on to exercise his vocation are sometimes so difficult that, in order to be successful, he needs to be a master of strategy. We can best illustrate and enforce this statement by a few anecdotes. A journalist was sent at very short notice to supply a descriptive account of a marriage of a Royal Princess at St. George's Chapel. He did not possess a ticket of admission and was, as a consequence, politely turned back by the officials at the entrance. Wandering disconsolately about the Castle Yard, he happened to meet a chorister with whom he had been previously acquainted in his own cathedral city. He explained to him his difficulty in securing admission, and the chorister suggested that his journalistic friend should don a surplice and enter the Chapel with the choir. The idea was carried out, and the journalist had a far better view of the ceremony than he could possibly have obtained otherwise. When it was thought desirable to throw the light of publicity on the casual wards of the London workhouses, James Greenwood conceived the idea of becoming an "Amateur Casual," and as such underwent experiences which electrified the country. There was novelty in the idea and this, quite as much as the revelations of the special correspondent, accounted for the startling success of this piece of journalistic enterprise. The special correspondent who would steal a march on his fellows needs to be extremely wily in order to succeed in hoodwinking colleagues possessed of acute intellect and ready resource. In this field of enterprise, subtlety is of little use without the command of money, and in the present day the newspaper's cheque is the most potent medium for securing information from those who have a story to tell. Archibald Forbes was once commissioned to secure the details of a famous wreck,

and he set about the business in characteristic fashion. He went down to the port and, fixing his quarters at a small waterside tavern, where his journalistic colleagues would be least likely to look for him, he chartered a steam tug. In due course, the ship bringing home the survivors was signalled. Forbes's tug, in defiance of the port regulations, got alongside the ship in advance of the quarantine and Customs officers, and Forbes scrambled aboard. He was successful in getting a long narrative from the only survivor who could tell the story, and, what was equally important, he closed the man's mouth so that the group of Pressmen, who boarded the ship from the regular tender, found the man absolutely silent.

Expert Knowledge often Necessary.

There is another class of special correspondence which demands expert knowledge on some particular matter. The land question, for example, has come to the front in this country, and, as in other departments of human interest, we find that the special correspondent does much to prepare the way for legislation by a series of articles, of which those contributed by Sir H. Rider Haggard to *The Times* may be mentioned as a type.

From what we have said, it will be readily apparent that the special correspondent needs, in addition to a good all-round acquaintance with the conditions of newspaper work, to possess some special knowledge of the subject which inspires his pen. A civilian, without some actual acquaintance with military and naval work, would prove a failure as a war correspondent, as some such have in the past. But the special correspondent must, in many instances, read up or otherwise prepare himself for the particular work assigned to him, and, if he does this, he should be able, with the assistance he may derive from interviewing, to furnish his paper with special correspondence. Amid the exigencies of newspaper work, the reporter, who has shown a capacity for good descriptive work, may find himself at any time called on to undertake the duties of a special correspondent. He

should gladly avail himself of such a chance of exhibiting his ability in the higher walks of journalism.

The Dispatch of Special Correspondence.

The work of the special correspondent, in most cases, demands the frequent dispatch of his copy by telegraph. In order to do this effectively, especially from foreign countries and the colonies, it will be absolutely necessary for him to acquaint himself thoroughly with the regulations and the cost per word of messages. All arrangements for transmission must, of course, be carefully made with his editor before he starts on his mission. There is a large amount of special correspondence done within the area served by the British Post Office Telegraphs, and in regard to this a few suggestions may be of service. Every journalist should make a careful study of the public circular giving the regulations for " Press Messages," issued by command of the Postmaster-General. Particulars of this document will be found at the end of this volume.

It should be the first duty of the special correspondent or reporter, when dispatched to describe some catastrophe which has suddenly arisen, to see that notice of the intended sending of messages is given to the Secretary of the General Post Office, London. Sometimes this notice is given by the Editorial Department of a newspaper in the ordinary course, but the reporter would always do well to make sure, as he will thus avoid possible future trouble. On arriving at the place from which he proposes to dispatch his telegraphic news, he should, before doing anything else, pay a visit to the local telegraph office, and discover from the officials in charge the capacity of the instruments and wires, and, as far as he can judge, of the transmitting staff. Arrangements as to the time of dispatch and for enlisting the services of messengers should also be made. It often happens that a great calamity occurs where there is only a small telegraph office with one or two clerks, and in such instances the reporter will find it necessary to exercise some diplomacy

in order to get off adequate messages to his paper during a great rush of work. As a general rule, he will find that he owes a great deal to the courteous and willing labours of the telegraph clerks under difficult circumstances. The journalist should not forget that these men and women have to carry out the duties prescribed for them by their official superiors, and that it is on lines which concur with these that he has the best chance of getting his copy through to the newspaper office.

"Our London Correspondent."

A journalistic appointment which falls within the category of special correspondent, demands notice here. Many of the large provincial dailies have a London office, usually in Fleet Street, which is under the control of a member of the staff known as "Our London Correspondent." The best preparation for the duties of London Correspondent is experience gained in the provincial office, which should give a good knowledge of the interests of the district in relation to the Metropolis. The duties of the London Correspondent are various. He usually has a seat in the Gallery of the House of Commons, and furnishes his paper with what is termed a "sketch" of the proceedings, which partakes of the nature, partly of a summary, and partly of a description of what occurs in the House. He also arranges for, if he does not actually report, the speeches of local Members. He is responsible, wholly or in part, for the "London Letter"; and when public men from the locality served by his paper visit London on local business, it is the vigilant London correspondent who sends a record of their doings to his paper. In most cases, the large provincial dailies rent a private telegraph wire, and throughout the night the operator from the Post Office sits in the London office and transmits over the private wire, direct to the country office (where it is received by another telegraphic operator), a vast amount of news, which has been either written or arranged for by the London Correspondent.

CHAPTER XVI

SUB-EDITING

In the domain of journalism, the sub-editor occupies a singular position. His personality and work are practically unknown to the public. Newspaper readers are familiar enough with the appearance of the reporter, and can trace his contributions in the columns of his paper. They know, or imagine they know, for what portions of the contents of their favourite journal the hand of the editor is responsible. But they are ignorant of the functions and work of the sub-editor. And yet it is to the labours of that hard-working individual that the public is indebted for the style and character of all that makes its appearance in print in the news department of the daily or weekly journal. Sub-editing work is done on every description of paper—from the largest to the smallest; but there is, of course, a wide difference in the *personnel*. The large and influential morning journal has a corps of sub-editors arranged in departments; on the small weekly paper, the sub-editing duties are often performed by the single individual, who is also editor, reporter, proof-reader, and general literary factotum.

Qualifications for Sub-Editing.

Sub-editing work is similar in character, whether a newspaper be large or small; but it demands very varied ability, attainments, and experience in its many departments. It is the duty of the sub-editor to receive and peruse all news copy which reaches the office from every source. Where such copy is not in a form suitable for publication, it is his function to make it so; where it is defective or incorrect, it is his duty to correct it to the best of his ability from any information at his command; and where the news is either too long or altogether trivial, it is his duty to re-write

in acceptable form, to condense, or to reject. There are many pitfalls in the path of the sub-editor, due to either accident or design, and his judgment is severely tested by his having to decide, without delay, on the *bonâ fides* of some striking item which is offered to the paper through one of the many agencies by which news reaches his desk. If the sub-editor is over-cautious, he becomes alive to the disagreeable fact that some item which he turned down as apocryphal is, after all, a true statement of facts in the publication of which a contemporary journal is enjoying what is known as a " scoop," that is, exclusive publicity. But if the sub-editor errs on the side of rashness, and without making such inquiries as may be possible, he may find that some over-zealous journalist has contributed news which is not trustworthy, and the insertion of a disclaimer becomes necessary—a thing which is always repugnant to the newspaper man. To the difficulties arising from mistakes, accidental errors, and imperfect information, there is one other which is not unknown in most newspaper offices. There are incorrigible practical jokers who consider the newspaper a suitable butt for their misdirected ingenuity. The wary sub-editor has to be on his guard against innocent-looking items which have a double meaning. These usually take the form of some fictitious archæological discovery, with an inscription of the famous " Bill Stumps " variety. In addition to the cares and responsibilities which attach to the revision of copy for the Press, the sub-editor is called upon to exercise good management in handling the copy destined for the composing room. He needs the ability—acquired only in actual practice—of being able to estimate the amount of the copy he is sending through to the printers ; and he needs also to be able to supply that copy in an even flow throughout the time occupied in putting the next day's or week's newspaper in type. If he does not keep a close check on the amount of copy he is giving out—by asking for reports from the composing room from time to time as to the number of columns set—hew ill probably get the

unpleasant announcement from an agonized foreman printer, just before the paper is made up, that there are so many columns too much matter for the available space. And if he does not so arrange things that copy goes to the printers with promptitude, he may create an awkward congestion which will throw the mechanical arrangements for the production of the newspaper quite out of gear, and cause the losing of early trains and other troubles, of which he will be likely to hear very speedily from an irate publisher.

Correction of Printers' Proofs.

It is absolutely essential that the sub-editor should be able to revise proofs submitted by the printer. Such ability is also a material qualification for all kinds of journalistic work—from that of the junior reporter to the leader writer. For the benefit of the uninitiated, it should be explained that newspaper proofs take the form of impressions of type of the width of a single column of a newspaper, the type being placed in a tray, known to the printer as a galley. Hence the printed impression from this type on narrow slips of paper is known as a " galley slip " or a " galley proof." The type is printed in the middle of the slip, leaving a margin on both sides for corrections. Reporters, and contributors in some instances, but not in all, have the opportunity of reading and revising such proofs before the matter is made up in the pages of the newspaper. The sub-editor, on the other hand, passes in review proofs of all the matter set for the newspaper, and thus has the opportunity of making any corrections which later intelligence has rendered necessary, or of striking out passages which, for any reason, it is considered undesirable to print.

There is, fortunately, a uniform and universal method of correcting a printer's proof, and the young journalist would do well to master the method and memorise the symbols employed, very early in his career. Amateur methods of correcting proofs may lead to serious errors and trouble ; therefore only the orthodox style should be followed. We

give on the next page a facsimile of an incorrect passage revised for the Press. All the signs used are introduced, but it should be explained that typographical matter does not usually show more than a fraction of the errors which are concentrated in this short passage.

Departments of Sub-Editing.

There is more variety than might be imagined in sub-editorial work. It has been already mentioned, indeed, that it is arranged in departments on the larger journals. A brief survey of the various kinds of sub-editing follows, in which is included information derived from experience in the work. Speaking generally, there is one important maxim which no sub-editor should forget. It is embodied in the sentence: "When in doubt, strike out." This precept has obviously a very wide application, and should never be forgotten by the sub-editor as the final and absolutely safe solution when a serious difficulty arises. The sub-editor's weapon in dealing with copy is familiar to the public as the "blue pencil"; and, in truth, a good blue pencil is best suited for deleting from the copy which passes under the sub-editor's eye the verbiage, redundancies, statements in bad taste, and uninteresting details, which detract from the value of the news item.

Sub-Editing Telegraphic Copy.

In present-day newspaper production, in relation at least to the daily morning and evening papers, a very considerable proportion of the news is sent by telegraph. The chief trouble to the sub-editor in dealing with telegraphic copy arises from the fragmentary and irregular way in which it reaches the newspaper office. Occasionally the middle of a news item or report, or even the end, may come to hand before the beginning has been delivered by the telegraph messenger. Sometimes the reporter dispatches a series of messages at different times during the evening and, without

CORRECTED PRINTERS' PROOF.

~~Press~~ ~~Corrections.~~ [1]

[2] The association of the people with the press, [3]
[4] which is every year becoming more and more [5]
intimate by the general acquaintance and [6]
cultivation of the art of composition, ren- [7]
[8] ders it necessary that Everyone should [9]
[10] become acquainted with the ways of the
press so that he may be able to present [11]
[12] literary his productions to the public in
the correct form. [13]

The revision of an article for a magazine [14]
or trade organ, and the correction of a proof, [15]
[16] ~~need~~ a knowledge ~~of the marks~~ of the [17]
marks that are employed by ~~literary men~~ [18]
[19] and press readers in revising and correcting
[20] their work. The list of corrections here em- [21]
[22] ployed will be intelligible in any printing
office. The origin of greater part of these [23]
[24] corrections is obvious. Such words as
[25] delete from the Latin deleo, to blot out, [26]
[27] carry us ~~us~~ back to the days of Elzevir and
[28] Plantin, when nearly all *books* were printed [29]
in Latin, and printers were latin scholars. [30]

EXPLANATION OF CORRECTION MARKS.

1. Change from lower case to CAPITALS. For SMALL CAPS write " SM. CAPS " ; and for *Italic* write *It.*
2. Commence a new paragraph.
3. Letter upside down.
4. A letter of a wrong fount (" wf.").
5. Put a space in.
6. Wrong letter.
7. Insert a hyphen.
8. Too much space ; put the words closer together.
9. Substitute a small letter for the capital.
10. " Delete " (take out).
11. Insert a comma.
12. Transpose these words (*trs.* = transpose).
13. No fresh paragraph ; let the matter run on.
14. A space is standing up.
15. Put these letters straight.
16. Substitute the word in the margin for that crossed out.
17. See 10.
18. Let these words stand ; they have been crossed out by mistake (*stet* = let it stand).
19. This letter is broken or battered.
20. Insert a full stop.
21. Some words have been omitted ; refer to copy. Where there are only a few words omitted, they may be written in the margin. If the omission is a long one a reference is made to the copy.
22. Letter omitted.
23. Word omitted.
24. Close up.
25. Put this word in quotation marks ; that is, between inverted commas.
26. *Italic.*
27. See 10.
28. Transpose the letters.
29. Roman.
30. Substitute a capital for the lower case letter.

The passage as corrected is as under—

PRESS CORRECTIONS.

The association of the people with the press, which is every year becoming more and more intimate by the general acquaintance and cultivation of the art of composition, renders it necessary that everyone should become acquainted with the ways of the press, so that he may be able to present his literary productions to the public in the correct form. The revision of an article for a magazine or trade organ, and the correction of a proof, require a knowledge of the marks that are employed by literary men and press readers in revising and correcting their work. Although these signs at present differ slightly in different printing offices, the list of corrections here employed will be intelligible in any printing office. The origin of the greater part of these corrections is obvious. Such words as " delete," from the Latin *deleo*, to blot out, carry us back to the days of Elzevir and Plantin, when nearly all books were printed in Latin, and printers were Latin scholars.

some means of ascertaining the order of dispatch, the sub-editor is liable to deal erroneously with the mass of " flimsies " —as the telegraphic messages are termed—which reach him from the Post Office. As everyone knows, the time at which a message was handed in is stated in plain figures on the ordinary pink telegraph form. But Press messages, which are manifolded by telegraphists on semi-transparent flimsies, contain only code letters to indicate the time at which the message was handed in. From what we have said, it will be obvious that it is very important to the sub-editor to be able to arrange the telegraphic copy, which is constantly being delivered at his table, in the order in which the messages were dispatched. The code employed by telegraphists is very simple, and is as under—

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

If a reporter hands in a message at 11 o'clock, the letter L will appear on the telegraphic flimsies. Should he dispatch a second message ten minutes later, the letters L B will appear on the flimsies ; and so on. The first letter, it will be noted, stands for the hour, and the second for consecutive periods of five minutes (as on a clock face). F F, for example, representing 6.30. In order to indicate the precise minute at which the message was handed in, a third letter is used, which is one of the following four—

R	S	W	X
1st minute	2nd minute	3rd minute	4th minute

To indicate 6.31, therefore, the telegraphist uses the letters F F R ; for 6.32, F F S ; for 6.33, F F W ; and for 6.34, F F X.

Errors in transmission often give the sub-editor serious trouble, but he should be on sufficiently good terms with the Superintendent of the Telegraphic Department to be able to secure a prompt verification in cases of importance. If the discrepancy does not greatly affect the sense of the

message, he will either amend or omit the doubtful passage. Where a morning newspaper has a special wire, it is, of course, possible for the sub-editor to make better arrangements with a view to accuracy and general convenience than when the messages are dispatched over the public wires.

Sub-Editing Staff Reports, etc.

The copy handed in to the sub-editor by the staff reporters needs only, in the case of the experienced men, to be read through and reduced in length, if the exigencies of space demand curtailment. The formality of reading through should not be omitted in any case, as even the best of reporters may occasionally fall into an inaccuracy or omission which would cause a serious loss of time later on. The work of junior reporters needs especially careful revision, though in some cases a senior member of the reporting staff will give valuable aid by revising it before it reaches the sub-editor.

In association with copy contributed by a variety of people, the sub-editor will soon discover that the use of different abbreviations for common words is a fruitful cause of error. All would be well if everyone used the table given at the end of this work, but they do not. Whenever the vigilant sub-editor finds, for example, that some contributor has used the contraction *fr*, he should use his blue pencil to convert it into either *for* or *from*, or there is a possibility that the operator will mistranslate the abbreviation. The danger of serious error in the illustration we have selected has been referred to in a previous chapter. Where a newspaper receives cable messages direct from a correspondent abroad, these dispatches are often sent in a condensed form, in order to economise on the heavy cable charges for Press messages. This method of omitting unimportant words is known as "skeletonising." It is the duty of the sub-editor to supply the omitted words so that an intelligible item of news may be evolved from the skeleton; and, where nothing material is added to the message, no objection can be taken

to the practice. No respectable newspaper conductor would, indeed, sanction amplification which added descriptive matter or " facts " not included in the cable message. It is, of course, perfectly legitimate to elucidate an item of cable news by a supplementary paragraph in the form of a note derived from reference books or other sources.

Quotations used by speakers ought to be verified, though this is a counsel of perfection which the harassed sub-editor cannot always follow. But dictionaries of quotations are now very comprehensive, and the sub-editor ought to have one of the best at his elbow. Where copy is found to be badly or imperfectly punctuated, the sub-editor needs to be especially careful in revising, as the linotype operator would waste valuable time if he had to pause to think about the right punctuation.

Specialist Sub-Editing.

Many of the large dailies, and more especially the leading provincial dailies, devote a considerable portion of their space every day to news of a special character. Only a sub editor versed in the subject can deal effectively with such copy. In a mining district, for example, the space devoted to mining is under the supervision of a specialist sub-editor ; while at a naval port the sub-editor who deals with the naval news is frequently an individual who has seen service in the Royal Navy.

Exchange Sub-Editing.

On the staffs of American newspapers there is an individual known as the " Exchange Editor." It is the duty of this functionary to peruse all contemporary journals and clip from them any item deemed of especial interest to the readers of his own newspaper. This work usually falls within the duties of one of the sub-editors in an English newspaper office. He deals with such items usually in one of two ways. He either quotes the item by mentioning the title of the newspaper from which it was extracted, or he hands the cutting

to some member of the staff who is deputed to make inquiries and to re-write with such additional information as he can obtain. In some newspaper offices, many news items are customarily copied as they appear from contemporary journals: thus an evening paper will copy freely from a morning paper published six or eight hours earlier, and a weekly journal will help itself to the news it finds both in morning and evening papers. The usage is not defensible either legally or morally; but, unless carried to unreasonable extremes, the papers from which news is extracted do not make any serious objection. When, however, a special contribution is transferred verbatim to another news sheet, without even the pretence of quotation, the perpetrator is very likely to hear something unpleasant about his piracy. Some time ago, *The Times* found that other newspapers were filling their columns with articles and telegrams copied verbatim from its pages. In threatening proceedings, *The Times* of 15th April, 1905, gave a definition of the "fair quotation" to which it did not object, and this sub-editors would do well to remember when copying from other journals. Fair quotation should, *The Times* said, "in no case exceed one-third of the article quoted, accompanied by full acknowledgment" of the source.

To the sub-editor, perhaps, more than to any member of the staff, except the editor, a knowledge of newspaper law is of the utmost importance; though, of course, every contributor to the Press should acquaint himself with the general principles of the law as it affects the working journalist. This subject is dealt with in the section of this work entitled "Newspaper Law."

CHAPTER XVII

LEADER WRITING

The highest form of journalistic work is that which is found in those columns of the Newspaper Press which are devoted to leading articles. As their name indicates, they are designed to lead public opinion; and, although it is sometimes argued that the "leader" has become unnecessary because people are nowadays well able to form their own opinions without the assistance of the Press, the fact remains that leading articles still exercise very great influence in national affairs—an influence which is envied alike by the orators of the platform and by those of the pulpit. There have been modifications in the past in the style of the leading article, and it is probable that others will become apparent in the future. The old-fashioned "woolly" specimen, of portentous length, padded out with platitudes, has given place to shorter leaders, closely reasoned and crisp in style. Greater variety is also a distinctive feature of the modern "leader"; Eatanswill partisan tirades, seasoned with extravagant invective, have been succeeded by leaders designed to form the opinion of newspaper readers on every subject of interest, domestic or foreign. This being the case, the disappearance of the modern style of leader from the Newspaper Press would be a calamity. If we reflect for a moment, we shall see that a newspaper without definite opinions ably expressed, is a colourless production which cannot exercise the influence which every good paper should do on contemporary affairs. There may be some newspaper readers who can appreciate the true import of certain items of news; but with the great amount and variety of news of importance presented each day to the public, there can be but few who do not value leading articles for the assistance

they give in estimating the true import of the intelligence of the day in so many departments of our complex modern life. All the best newspapers express their support in their leading columns of one or other of the great political parties in the State, and there can be no doubt that this method is useful to the community. But the newspaper should by no means stoop to the *rôle* of the mere party hack which supports everything proposed or done by its own side, whatever may be the views of its editor as to the wisdom of a particular policy. The most influential organs are undoubtedly those which act with independence in discussing party action.

Qualities Essential to Success.

The business of leader writing demands quite exceptional qualifications, and it is not every journalist who possesses these. The writer must be especially well informed; he must possess a clear and effective style; and he must have a readiness in forming opinions, or in advocating a policy, such as is not possessed by everyone. A famous French journalist, M. Veuillot, ably described the qualities essential to success in leader writing in terms both eloquent and true when he said: "The talent of the journalist consists in promptitude, in the flashing stroke; above all, in clearness. He has only a sheet of paper and an hour to state his case, to best his adversary, and to give his judgment; if he says a word that does not go straight to its mark, if he uses a phrase that his reader does not seize in an instant, then he does not understand his trade. Let him be rapid, let him be precise, let him be simple. The pen of the journalist has all the privileges of free, bold conversation: he ought to use them. But no display; and let him, above all, keep clear of all effort after eloquence."

All the daily newspapers have a staff of leader writers, but this staff is not organised on one particular pattern. In the matter of the reporting and the sub-editing staffs, the duties and the work expected are very similar on all

papers, but there is an individuality about the editorial corps of leader writers which gives a distinctiveness to the leading columns of each journal. Sometimes the editor himself contributes leaders, but more usually he devotes himself to the function of discovering and inspiring others to put into literary form the opinions he desires expressed. There are usually certain leader writers attached to the staff whose sole duty it is to watch the current of public affairs and write leaders thereon for their newspapers. But the editor often has the good fortune to discover other individuals who possess a special aptitude for writing on particular topics, although they are not regularly engaged in journalistic work. Thus it happens that special subjects are often treated in leaders supplied either by a clever barrister, a well-informed clergyman, or an author. The editor who is able to enlist the services of a corps of leader writers such as we have indicated will have the satisfaction of always providing his readers with a freshly written and varied succession of leading articles which shall not only interest but inform, quite apart from the advocacy of any particular policy.

Those who make Good Leader Writers.

The average journalist, the "all-round" man, will, if he possesses the needful ability, make a good leader writer: his training having been a useful preparation for the work. A journalist of this kind does, in fact, often find an opportunity for leader writing. He secures, let us suppose, an important item of news, and the only form in which it is desirable or expedient to convey it to the public is in a leading article. This the well-equipped journalist should be able to write. He will be inspired in his task if he remembers that some of the most important political information has been conveyed to the public in the past through the medium of a leader written by a reporter, who had gained the knowledge during his ordinary quest for news and had appreciated its importance.

Fashion in Leader Writing.

We have already noted the fact that fashions change in the form of leaders, as of most other things. There was a day when the high-class morning newspaper had one pattern of leader and no other. The leader had no heading ; it extended to the uniform length of just over one column ; and it consisted of three paragraphs—no more and no less. Daring innovators have, within the last quarter of a century, greatly changed the aspect of the leader page of our newspapers. Titles have been introduced, so that the reader can see at a glance what is the subject treated ; and, with titles, a novelty was invented by Sir Henry Lucy in the shape of a small-type title set in a square blank space near the top left-hand corner of the article. This innovation found many imitators, but we must confess that a heading across the column in bold antique type appears to us to be more effective. The old-fashioned leader, owing to the necessity of expansion to the prescribed length, was occasionally a little irrelevant ; it was needful to resort to padding, a thing which is always bad in newspaper work. But, nowadays, shorter leaders and more of them are to be found in even the most conservative organs ; and what was at one time thought a daring innovation, the " leaderette," has come to stay. In regard to very short leaders, or leaderettes, the opinion may be expressed that they are not always so effective as the longer style of article ; but there are, undoubtedly, some journalists who can make a pronouncement of about three hundred words brilliantly effective. Occasionally, the average newspaper man has opportunities of contributing leaderettes, and he should do his best to make them something far more than a mere summary of news. Another kind of editorial matter to which most of the members of a newspaper staff have the opportunity of contributing, is the column or more of local notes, which most provincial newspapers give their readers day by day. A sub-editor or reporter is often able to add to his income by contributing to the local notes, which, under a variety

of names, are a feature of many journals. As there is a constant demand for notes, the alert journalist will find the work and the profit alike worthy of his attention. It will be possible for him to specialise, so that his editor will make it his custom to look to him for notes dealing with some particular class of information.

Summary Writing.

One of the editorial assistants, who is more or less identified with the production of leading articles, usually undertakes the duty of writing the summary. To the busy newspaper reader, who has not the time to make even a casual survey of the many pages to which the modern newspaper extends, a good summary is a boon and a blessing. To be of real use, it should be complete as well as concise. The larger daily newspapers find it possible to epitomise the news of the day in a series of short paragraphs, each dealing with a separate topic, and ranging from a few words below to a few over fifty words each. The task of rapidly condensing a long statement, or story, or speech, and of giving all the absolutely essential facts in a short *précis*, requires especial skill and aptitude, when, moreover, it is remembered that the information has to be sought from a mass of proofs and manuscript, which are only accessible to the summary writer just before the paper goes to press. As a good summary gives completeness to the news sheet, it is a pity that it should be abandoned by some journals; but there can be no doubt that the increasing pressure on the great daily newspapers to get to press earlier than was the case in the past, has led to the abandonment, in some cases, of the summary.

CHAPTER XVIII

EDITING

THE highest position on the Newspaper Press is that occupied by the editor, who is responsible in the estimation of the public, and in the eye of the law, for everything of any description appearing in the newspaper or periodical which is under his charge. The responsibility is precisely the same, whether the editor has control of a great morning journal or of a comparatively small newspaper. And the success of the enterprise depends, to a great extent, upon the editor's ability and resource. He does his work most effectively when he is not hampered by the interference of proprietors or business managers. Some of the most brilliant successes in modern journalism have been achieved by editors who have had an absolutely free hand, while there have been notable instances of journals which have suffered considerably through the interference of the business manager in the editorial work.

The Rewards of Editorship.

The kind of ability which an editor should possess varies widely, and there is a corresponding difference in the emoluments, ranging from a comfortable annual salary represented by four figures which is paid to the editor of a daily journal, to a casual five-pound note earned by a working journalist for the performance of the editorial duties connected with some small publication. When the great variety of newspapers and periodicals in existence is considered, we shall not, of course, be surprised to discover that there are many kinds of editors, although there are certain characteristics which are common to the work of them all. These have been effectively epitomised in humorous verse

by an American author, who expresses himself in the following terms with regard to the duties and qualifications of the editor—

Can he leave all his wrongs to the future, and carry his heart in his cheek ?
Can he do an hour's work in a minute, and live upon sixpence a week ?
Can he courteously talk to an equal, and browbeat an impudent dunce ?
Can he keep things in apple-pie order, and do half a dozen at once ?
Can he press all the springs of knowledge, with quick and reliable touch,
And be sure that he knows how much to know, and knows how to not know too much ?

Does he know how to spur up his virtues, and put a check-rein on his pride ?
Can he carry a gentleman's manners within a rhinoceros' hide ?
Can he know all, and do all, and be all, with cheerfulness, courage, and *vim ?*
If so, we perhaps can be making an Editor " outer of him ! "
And 'tis thus with our noble profession, and thus it will ever be : still
There are some who appreciate its labours, and some who, perhaps, never will.

Editorial Control.

In a daily newspaper office, the editor has the supreme control of the journal, and stands at the head of a very elaborate organisation. While he is responsible for everything which appears in his paper, there is a particular portion of it which he personally supervises. This is the columns devoted to leading and other special articles, and contributions addressed to the editor. Under his control is a capable staff of editorial assistants, who carry out his orders and work under his direction. Having regard to the conditions under which a morning paper is produced, the wise editor takes care to have two or three trusty lieutenants, who can relieve him of a portion at least of the onerous and incessant labours associated with newspaper production. By this means, the editor can reserve his energies for the higher duties of supervision, and relieve himself of the intolerable strain entailed in any attempt to deal single-handed with the editing of the many departments of the modern newspaper.

Anonymity: The Paper, not the Editor and Contributor.

Editorial anonymity is the distinctive characteristic of British journalism. The editor, leader writers, and other staff contributors merge their individuality, as it were, in the paper with which they are associated. The opinions expressed are not those of the individual who wrote the article, or of the editor who revised and altered it, but of that non-personal entity, the newspaper itself. For the journalist this is a self-denying ordinance, because, however able and convincing may be his contributions, he does not obtain the fame or credit which comes to the man who writes his own name at the foot of his articles. This is, without doubt, not to the advantage of the journalist; but it does not appear likely that it will ever be possible for British papers to depart from the non-personal style of journalism, by which the public obtains, from day to day, what is put forward as the considered views of the paper in which they appear, and not merely the thoughts or opinions of the individual writer. Signed articles are not, however, without their value and special importance in the newspaper. When any individual of admitted eminence responds to the editor's invitation to write on the topic of which he is a master, it would be absurd and altogether unsatisfactory not to publish the name of the contributor. But there must always be cases in which special circumstances make it desirable for the editor to accept responsibility for particular articles by publishing them without the authors' names. The statements speak for themselves, and the fact that they appear in a responsible organ of public opinion gives them an importance which public men cannot disregard.

Letters to the Editor.

The remarks just made are applicable also to an important class of contributions with which the editor has to deal. We refer to "Letters to the Editor." These letters come

unsolicited to the conductors of newspapers, and represent the public use of the Press as a kind of free forum for the discussion of topics of the day. A famous editor once said that he gauged the importance of any particular public question by the number of letters which were addressed to his paper regarding it, and without doubt his view is absolutely correct. An important part of the editorial function consists in considering and deciding on letters which shall be published or rejected. This duty needs especial care when controversialists advocating different views engage in a wordy warfare. The first essential in dealing with such letters is to be absolutely impartial, and to see that the disputants on each side have their fair share of publicity and no more. The editor must also carefully feel the public pulse, and know exactly when his readers have had enough of any particular controversy. If the subject is of sufficient importance, an editorial article will often prove an effective addenda at the closing of the correspondence.

Responsibility for Contents of Newspaper.

Some newspapers place at the head of their correspondence columns an announcement to the effect that the editor does not hold himself responsible for the opinions expressed by writers of letters. This should be obvious to the most unsophisticated newspaper reader; but the editor should never forget that he, and the proprietors of his journal, are legally liable for everything which the letters published in the newspaper contain. Many newspaper letter writers appear to be quite innocent of knowledge of the law of libel, but the editor should make it a rule to exclude all reflections on the honesty or capacity of persons criticised by letter writers. Another point in regard to letters to the editor often gives that individual a considerable amount of trouble. The letters received for publication may be roughly grouped into two classes: those to which the writer signs his name, and those to which a pseudonym is affixed—the writer of

the latter enclosing his name and address in confidence to the editor and "not for publication." This confidence the editor is in honour bound to respect, except under certain conditions. When, for example, some infuriated individual visits the sanctum and wants to be told who is the writer of some perfectly legitimate criticism of official conduct or otherwise, the editor will politely but firmly decline to furnish the information. When, for some good reason, an individual desires to communicate with the writer of a letter, the editor will, if courteously asked to do so, forward the communication himself, and thus preserve the letter writer's anonymity. But should the writer of a letter to the editor have made statements on which any person aggrieved should take proceedings for libel, which the editor is advised can be maintained in the courts, his obvious course is at once to give such satisfaction as will ensure a settlement, leaving the question of disclosure to his solicitor. An occurrence of this kind may not happen in a journalist's whole career, but inadvertently a libellous statement may find its way into print; and, when we remember the great speed with which newspapers are sent to press, the occasional occurrence of such a mischance is not a matter for surprise. All letters to the editor need, in fact, to be scrutinised with unusual care before publication. The editor is well advised who asks himself before publishing a letter: "Is it in the public interest to give currency to these statements?" If he decides that it is, then it is his obvious duty to afford the letter the hospitality of his columns. But if the letter appears to be written to gratify spite, or to damage the reputation of someone, the editor will remember that he is not in any way called upon to risk his own reputation, and that of his paper, by making the latter the vehicle for such statements. He will steadily resist the blandishments of any who tell him that if the publication of the letter leads to trouble they will "see him through." Such promises are absolutely worthless, for when there is trouble the writers of such letters to the editor usually give him no kind of

material assistance. In all matters connected with newspaper control, the editor should, in fact, act with but a single motive, namely, the well-being of his journal. He will thus best serve the public and gain the respect of newspaper readers.

The position of editor is the highest which can be attained on the Newspaper Press; but while all journalists cannot, in the nature of things, become editors, the post is one which should be aimed at by all who adopt newspaper work as their occupation in life. They will be encouraged in their aspirations by the thought that most of the great editors of to-day have risen from the ranks, and that some began on the very lowest rung of the journalistic ladder.

CHAPTER XIX

FREE LANCE AND LINAGE WORK

Among the toilers in the wide field of journalism, there is a class of men who are not specially connected with any newspaper, but who gain a more or less comfortable livelihood by the discharge of such journalistic commissions as are entrusted to them by various editors and newspaper conductors. These men are usually known as "free lance" journalists, because they are ready, at any time, to take up any description of newspaper work that may be offered to them. Their position in life has some resemblance to that of the solicitor or medical man who builds up a practice among a number of clients, who go to or send for him when they require his services. The free lance journalist does not always rely for subsistence on the commissions he receives from newspaper conductors. He may have, for example, a printing office or a stationery business, which needs little personal supervision, or he may hold some appointment in association with shorthand writing or newspaper correspondence, which leaves him at liberty to work as a free lance.

The Free Lance in Practice.

The opportunity of the free lance journalist occurs when there is more work at the newspaper office than the staff can possibly cope with. Some event, let us suppose, happens suddenly, and the Chief has not a man available to deal with it. He promptly calls the printer's devil, as the brisk youngster who does the errands of the journalistic staff is familiarly termed, and dispatches him post haste with a note to the free lance. That trusty and indefatigable journalist will most likely be discovered at home finishing

off a commission for some other editorial client. He completes the work in hand, puts it in an envelope to await the call of a messenger at an appointed time, and proceeds with all dispatch to the discharge of the new commission. Another opening for free lance work is afforded when some important event, such as a royal visit, a conference, or an unusual amount of public speaking is expected. At such times, the free lance will work with the ordinary staff during the entire period of pressure.

The free lance man is usually a competent journalist of the "all-round" variety, who can do with credit any of the duties falling to the lot of the newspaper man which do not involve special knowledge or qualifications. Assuming professional ability, the most important virtue of the free lance man is absolute reliability. The practitioner who fails to have his copy ready at the specified time, or neglects to attend his assignment, or sends in untrustworthy news, will speedily find himself on the editor's black list, and will probably not get the chance of disappointing his client again. But the free lance who can be depended on to represent his paper with efficiency, is never forgotten when there is a demand for the services he can render.

Regular Correspondents.

A fair number of journalists who hold appointments on local journals act as correspondents for other newspapers, and supply them with either a daily budget of news, or with items of important intelligence. For these services, they are usually paid a fixed salary. The amount of news required is not sufficient to make it worth while for the paper served to have a resident representative. The duties can be easily discharged by the reporter of a local paper, and, provided that the correspondence does not go to a paper which seriously competes with his own, the reporter's principal does not usually object to his acting as correspondent for another organ.

The great organisations for the collection and distribution of

intelligence to newspapers, clubs, and other subscribers (of which a list is given under the heading of " Reporting, Telegraphing, and News Agencies " in *Willing's Press Guide*, 1s.), appoint correspondents in most large centres of population. These correspondents are usually supplied with books of Press telegraphic passes, so that the expense of telegraphing is borne by the agency. Items of news forwarded in accordance with the requirements and regulations of the agency are paid for, if accepted and used, at what may be termed sliding scale rates. For short, ordinary items, there is a fixed tariff; but for exclusive news of exceptional importance, conductors of agencies pay liberally. The agencies are always open to take any special item from a journalist who is not on their regular staff, provided that they are satisfied of the *bonâ fides* of the communication. Much greater care is now exercised in this respect than in former years; and the unknown journalist should, if the item is of very great importance, give the agency some means of verification through the medium of a private telegram.

The " Penny-a-Liner."

In the past, more than in the present, the daily newspapers, and particularly those published in London, were content to rely on the voluntary and casual services of a number of men who collected particular classes of news and sent an identical manifolded copy of their report to all the newspapers likely to accept it. In most cases, the papers had no agreements or arrangements with such men, and accepted news, which any of them might submit, if it appeared desirable. This class of journalistic workers was known as " penny-a-liners," a term which is now shortened to " liner " simply, and in it were some of the most picturesque figures in London journalism of the early Victorian Era. The liners were true Bohemians, with a refreshing neglect of the conventions of society. Neither their methods nor their manners would be tolerated to-day, while the florid and inflated language in which they recorded the events of

the hour has become proverbial. These casual workers in the field of journalism had one object in life, which was to secure the insertion of their copy, and, this being the case, they were not too scrupulous in their method of recording news. There was, of course, competition between liners, as there is in the present day. This led, and no doubt still leads, the unscrupulous to send in highly coloured reports or to exercise their inventive ingenuity in arranging "public meetings," and in securing the passing of strong "resolutions" on questions of national concern. Sub-editors, however, made, and still make, careful inquiry, before accepting the copy, as to the truth or otherwise of some sensation reported by the irresponsible liner. Priority in point of time is of the utmost importance in speculative linage work, and hence the liner has been known to adopt many ingenious expedients designed to result in his being first on the scene, at some sensational calamity or crime.

This class of work is, however, not confined to men who are liners, and nothing more. Journalists engaged on most of the papers of the country take part in speculative linage work, or have an understanding with certain papers that items sent on approval will be used if considered worthy of publication. There is in linage work very keen competition among reporters engaged on different papers in a town or district, and this is responsible for most of the ill-feeling which manifests itself in an otherwise harmonious profession. The reporter who is known to be furnishing linage for some particular area to some particular journals strongly resents the intrusion of colleagues, and the general designation of the practice of those who indulge in illicit competition is that of "poaching." Should, by any chance, the poacher's copy be used instead of that of the regular contributor, the latter does not fail to express himself with vigour on the subject. Another practice, to which the liner strongly objects, is that in which some sub-editors indulge of competing with him as a liner, by "milking" the copy which he has furnished for insertion in his own paper. The milking

consists in extracting from the copy material for a short message, which will be circulated in competition with the work of the proper liner. But, as a general rule, newspaper conductors are loyal to their liner, and, provided his copy reaches them in good time, they will always use the dispatches of the man they know, in preference to those of the interloper, who is, probably, not known to them.

Payment for Linage.

The term " penny-a-liner " may have originally indicated the meagre sum which was paid per line for casual contributions. Where an item of news is important, but very short—say, half-a-dozen lines—the penny per liner rate would obviously be altogether inadequate for the time and trouble involved, to say nothing of the cost of telegraphing. There is, accordingly, a minimum payment of about half-a-crown for short items used. If, therefore, a liner has sent out his message to half-a-dozen papers, and has only got it accepted by two, he finds that, after he has paid the charges for telegraphing, a sum is still left which represents his profit on the transaction. In all linage work submitted without order, the liner has, of course, to pay the cost of getting his copy to the newspaper. He can, if practicable, deliver by hand, or send a news copy parcel by railway, prepaid ; but, in most cases, telegraphy at a reduced rate for a number of addresses is the only available plan. The liner sends in his account to the newspaper at stated intervals ; most journals have a monthly settlement with their contributors. In the majority of cases, he cannot discover whether his items have been used, and he, therefore, sends in a bill for the whole of his contributions, leaving the sub-editor to strike out items which have not been accepted.

It will not be without interest, perhaps, to mention that the spelling of " linage " used in this article is that which has been adopted by the Institute of Journalists. It has the advantage of being more phonetic and descriptive than " lineage "—a word having a distinct genealogical meaning.

CHAPTER XX

SOCIETIES AND SCHOOLS; SALARIES, ETC.

Two widely different institutions in connection with journalism are associated in the heading of our final chapter. There are many well-established societies for the benefit of journalists, but the movement in association with schools for the provision of training for the calling is a comparatively new one, although American Universities have experimented with the subject from time to time for a good many years past.

Journalists and Society Organisation.

The work of the journalist does not tend to make him a very enthusiastic society man; nor does it give him very much time to devote to the work of vocational associations. For many years, the bulk of British journalists have been content to expend their best energies in attending and reporting societies devoted to the promotion of every imaginable interest. Such societies have benefited vastly by the publicity of the Press; but, until recent times, it has not occurred to journalists as a whole that their own organisations ought to take their place—through the medium of an annual conference reported in the newspapers—among the societies which seek to guide and enlighten the public, and to promote the interests of their own members.

The Varieties of Journalistic Societies.

The journalistic societies now in existence may be broadly divided into two groups. The first of these, in point of age, consists of the benevolent organisations in association with the craft. These bodies are known generally as "Press

Funds," and they dispense every year considerable sums of money in the relief of distressed members; in the support and education of orphans; in allowances to widows; and in pensions to members unable through failing health to pursue their occupation. Loans are also made to members who, under certain conditions, are in need of funds. These societies likewise give aid to distressed journalists who have never been provident enough to become members; although, of course, only those who subscribe are eligible for the full benefits of the organisations. The benevolent societies, through their annual dinners and other means, receive subscriptions from public men, who are thus enabled to acknowledge their indebtedness to the Press generally for the help it gives to their work. The societies owe much to the unselfish and voluntary labours of the executive bodies, who do a large amount of valuable administrative work in connection with the funds entrusted to them.

The organisation of journalists on national lines for the promotion of their mutual interests led to the creation of the second group of journalistic societies, and this group has, in turn, to be sub-divided into two sections. The first and oldest of these includes those journalists who aspire to place their vocation among the professional bodies of the land—thus giving to journalism a status such as is enjoyed by accountants, architects, authors, and so forth. The other and later development of journalistic organisation has attracted to its ranks those who prefer that journalism should take its place as a trade union in association with the movement for organised labour. It is not our purpose to discriminate as to the claims of these societies on the allegiance of journalists, but it will suffice to point out that both are actively interested in the promotion of such legislative enactments as appear desirable for the protection of journalists in the discharge of duties which are for the public good, while each devotes great attention to matters affecting the individual welfare of members. The affairs of the societies

come very little before the public eye, but the organisations have their official organs, and these are worthy of perusal by all who are qualifying for, or are engaged in, journalistic work. Some of the newspapers connected with the printing trade, it may be noted, devote more or less space to the doings of journalistic societies, and from this source the young journalist can obtain a fairly adequate idea of what is going on in the profession, if he does not happen to see his way to membership.

Although we would not for a moment underrate the value of Press societies in giving the opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, or the promotion of the spirit of comradeship, it cannot be said that these bodies are of any appreciable assistance to a journalist in his contact with the public. From this point of view, the journalist will, unquestionably, derive the greatest possible advantage from becoming a Freemason. His association with the Masonic body will give him a social status of considerable value, and he will be brought into touch with a great number of friends in the Order who will prove of the utmost value to him in his professional career. Some journalists find it possible to take an active share in public work of a political, municipal, or philanthropic character ; but, on the whole, it is better that the journalist should keep outside of public work conducted on partisan lines. We do not say that he is likely to become a mere party hack, but we do affirm that a position of independence in political or municipal controversy is of the greatest importance.

Schools of Journalism.

Probably no subject in connection with journalism has been discussed with so little practical result as that of journalistic training. Experiments have, it is true, been made in this country and in America ; but, it must be confessed that the journalistic graduate of any college or institution is not, up to the present, very much in evidence. The bulk of those who take up the occupation of journalism

do so through the medium of a juniorship, or articles, and the training they receive is mostly practical, but it leaves a great deal to the personal initiative and ability of the individual. Without doubt, the best qualification for journalism is a sound general education, very much superior to that which is imparted in the elementary day school. There are too many young journalists who are entering on their duties with inadequate educational equipment, and the societies might do valuable work by affording means for improving this state of things.

British Ideas.

It is noteworthy that the curriculum of journalistic training which has been either discussed or actually experimented with in this country, differs radically from that which finds favour and is brought into practice in the United States of America. With one or two exceptions, when the question of educating the journalist arises in Great Britain, the authorities of the Universities offer facilities for journalistic aspirants to take part in such portions of the general course of study as are deemed most useful. They are invited to attend courses in political economy, history, or geography, and such additions to their general education are, without doubt, of much value. But it is obvious that these courses do not promote the technical knowledge or skill of aspirants.

American Ideas.

In America, the school of journalism in association with Universities devotes itself mainly to the professional training of graduates, and is conducted by journalists of experience. The most important school of the kind is to be found in the University of Missouri, where the School of Journalism is in charge of four expert journalists who hold college degrees. One of the professors specialises on the history and ethics of journalism. The technicalities of journalism, including reporting work, the preparation of copy for the Press, and the conduct of a newspaper, are treated by two of the

professors, who devote their time almost entirely to this department. The fourth professor gives instruction in advertising. On a more comprehensive basis, a department of journalism has been organised in association with the University of New York. The instruction is on distinctly practical lines, and is designed for the five classes of students mentioned below: Those who wish to prepare themselves for magazine work either as editors or as writers; those who are attracted towards newspaper work and are anxious to secure a preparation for positions as reporters, editorial writers, department editors, copy readers, etc.; those who wish to enter the field of trade journalism either as editors or writers; those who want a special training for the work connected with the advertising department of a magazine or newspaper; and those who want a special training for the work connected with the circulation department of a magazine or newspaper.

The Best Type of School.

The practical school of journalism is, in our opinion, to be preferred to that which seeks merely to impart additional learning to the embryo journalist. The aspirant ought to have a sufficiently good general education before he takes up a course of technical study; and if schools of journalism became the recognised method of entering the profession, they could perform a most useful service both to employers and to the public by refusing to admit to the courses any who did not possess a certain amount of education. The schools might very well serve as a trial ground for aspirants, and a competent faculty could discharge no more useful duty than that of dismissing from attendance those who were obviously not intended for journalists. The question of entrance into what, after all, must always be numerically a small profession, needs, we consider, the serious attention of the societies, as such attention constitutes the most important step in raising the status of journalism in order to meet the requirements of the present day.

Salaries, Etc.

Salaries for the various journalistic positions differ widely. On the great daily papers the editor's, the leader writer's, or the special correspondent's annual stipend is £1,000 or more, but the average salaries of newspaper workers on the majority of English papers are much smaller. The editor of a provincial weekly paper, the sub-editor, or the senior reporter of a daily journal are each paid salaries of about £3 per week, rising to a larger sum according to length of service. Many country reporters receive a weekly pay of from £2 to £2 5s. The remuneration of junior or district reporters is about 30s. per week. Those serving under articles, and whose parents or guardians have paid a premium, usually get a small weekly salary, rising to a maximum of about 12s. These figures must be taken as approximate only: in London and some large towns higher salaries are paid, while in country towns they are sometimes less than the sums named. All travelling expenses and hotel charges are paid by the newspaper proprietor. No objection is usually made to reporters earning what they can by correspondence or linage, but this source of income is precarious, and a great number of journalists are unable to secure linage work at all. When objection is taken to a journalist undertaking linage, he should be paid a higher salary for his exclusive services. Newspaper proprietors sometimes arrange to pay qualified members of their staff for special contributions outside the scope of their ordinary duties; for this description of work one guinea per column is often paid. Before entering on a staff appointment, the journalist is strongly advised to have a "scrap of paper" defining the duties and also the length of notice for the termination of the engagement.

Reference Books.

It has not been thought advisable to give a list of reference books for the journalist, other than those mentioned in the preceding pages. A reference library ought to be found in every newspaper office, but where it does not exist, the

journalist should avail himself of the resources of the public library. In some classes of work there may be a particular reference book, of which it is absolutely essential that he should always have the latest edition at his elbow. In the choice of reference books the journalist must, to a large extent, be guided by the special requirements of his work.

NEWSPAPER LAW

By Edward A. Cope

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CHAPTER I

FORMALITIES

1. Registration.—Under the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act, 1881 (44 & 45 Vic. c. 60), it is the duty of the "printers and publishers" of a newspaper to register, and to make "annually in the month of July in every year a return" to the registry, setting forth (*a*) the title of the newspaper; (*b*) the names of all the proprietors of the newspaper, together with their respective occupations, places of business (if any), and places of residence. Failure to comply with this requirement involves liability to heavy penalties. The registry for English newspapers is kept at Somerset House, London.

In instances in which it is inconvenient to insert the names of all the proprietors, the Registrar has power, on his being satisfied that that course is desirable, to allow the name of "a representative proprietor" to be substituted for the names omitted.

Registration is unnecessary where the proprietors of a newspaper are the shareholders in a properly incorporated joint stock company.

2. Imprint.—An important Act, passed in 1869 (32 & 33 Vic. c. 24) repealing many former Acts and re-enacting some of their provisions, continued in force an old statute requiring every newspaper to bear upon the first or last leaf, "in legible characters," the name and usual place of abode or business of the printer.

3. Preservation of Marked Copies.—Under the same Act, a provision in a former Act is continued in operation, the effect of which is that the printer of every newspaper who prints it for " reward, gain, or profit " must " carefully preserve and keep one copy, at least," of every newspaper so printed by him, and must " write or cause to be written or printed in fair and legible characters," on the copy so kept, the name and place of abode of the person or persons by whom he is employed to print it.

He is further under an obligation to produce his marked copy of any issue of the paper to any Justice of the Peace who may require to inspect it within six calendar months after the date of publication.

What is a Newspaper ?

It is sometimes a little difficult to say whether a particular publication can or cannot be properly described as a newspaper. The Act of 1881 contains a definition clause, rather curiously and not too grammatically worded, which gives the meaning of the term for the purposes of that Act. It defines a newspaper as " any paper containing public news, intelligence or occurrences, or any remarks or observations therein, printed for sale and published in England or Ireland periodically or in parts or numbers at intervals not exceeding twenty-six days between the publication of any two such papers, parts or numbers," and also " any paper printed in order to be disposed (*sic*) and made public weekly or oftener or at intervals not exceeding twenty-six days, containing only or principally advertisements." It will be seen that to constitute a publication a newspaper within the meaning of the Act of 1881, it must be issued periodically at intervals that are not required to be regular, but must not exceed twenty-six days, and that if it contains advertisements, it need not contain news.

An isolated publication is, therefore, not a newspaper, although it contains news ; a publication issued monthly is not a newspaper ; but a publication containing advertisements

only, if it is issued periodically at intervals of not more than twenty-six days, is a newspaper.

It is interesting to compare this definition with that contained in the Post Office Act, 1908 (8 Edw. VII, c. 48), which, for postal purposes, treats as a newspaper—

> " Any publication consisting wholly or in great part of political or other news or of articles relating thereto or to other current topics, with or without advertisements . . . published in numbers at intervals of not more than seven days."

CHAPTER II

PRIVILEGED REPORTS

Two questions arise as to the reporting of Parliamentary proceedings, namely: (1) The rights of newspaper proprietors as between themselves and Parliament; (2) their rights as against persons aggrieved by statements made in Parliament and reported by the Press.

Technically, there is no right to report the proceedings of Parliament. Both Houses have always been careful to reserve the right to prohibit publication. A Standing Order of the House of Lords dated as recently as 1902, and still in force, declares it to be a breach of privilege for any person to print or publish anything relating to the proceedings of that House without its permission; and there are various similar Orders of the House of Commons which still remain unrescinded. As a matter of practice, however, neither House attempts to enforce its strict rights against the Press except occasionally in the case of a report which it regards as grossly inaccurate or obviously untrue.

Lord Cockburn, delivering judgment in 1868 in *Wason* v. *Walter*, one of the "leading cases" as to the rights of the Press, summed up the entire position in a few sentences which every Pressman should bear in mind. "The fact, no doubt, is," said his Lordship, "that each House of Parliament does by its Standing Orders prohibit publication of its debates. But practically each House not only permits, but also sanctions and encourages, the publication of its proceedings, and actually gives every facility to those who report them. . . . Therefore, it is idle to say that the publication of Parliamentary proceedings is prohibited by Parliament. The Standing Orders which prohibit it are obviously maintained only to give to each House the control over the publication of its proceedings, and the power of

preventing or correcting any abuses of the facilities afforded. *Independently of the Orders of the Houses, there is nothing unlawful in public reports of Parliamentary proceedings.* Practically, such publication is sanctioned by Parliament; it is essential to the working of our Parliamentary system, and to the welfare of the nation."

The second question—that of the rights of persons aggrieved by statements made in the course of proceedings in Parliament and reported by the Press—was very fully discussed in the same case. It was held by a strong Court of four Judges that, so long as it is faithful and accurate, a report published in a newspaper of a debate in either of the Houses of Parliament in which statements were made disparaging to the character of an individual, is privileged, and that an action is not maintainable by the person whose character has been called in question against the newspaper which merely reported the debate.

It was pointed out, however, that the ground of the privilege is that the advantage of publicity to the community at large far outweighs any private injury resulting from the publication.

The same considerations apply to a condensed or summarised report, provided the facts do not get distorted in the process of summarising. If by the suppression of something material a report which, but for that suppression, would not be injurious, causes injury to an individual, the privilege will be lost.

Whether the report be professedly verbatim or condensed, if it turns out to be an inaccurate or untrue report, the privilege will also be lost.

Parliamentary Papers.

Where either House has directed or authorised the publication of reports, papers, votes, or proceedings, and any of these are reproduced, or extracts from them or abstracts or summaries of them are published in a newspaper, no action brought by a person who considers himself injured by any

statement contained in such Parliamentary paper or in any fair and accurate summary or abstract of it, to recover damages in respect of its publication in the newspaper, will succeed, if it can be proved to the satisfaction of a jury that the publication was *bonâ fide* and without malice. (*See* 3 & 4 Vict. c. 9, s. 3.)

Reports of Judicial Proceedings.

Reports of judicial proceedings are protected by the Law of Libel Amendment Act, 1888 (51 & 52 Vict. c, 64), which contains a provision enacting that—

> " a fair and accurate report in any newspaper of proceedings publicly heard before any court exercising judicial authority shall, if published contemporaneously with such proceedings, be privileged ; provided that nothing in this Section shall authorise the publication of any blasphemous or indecent matter."

It should be noticed that the privilege is carefully restricted to reports of proceedings " publicly heard," and that it applies only when the court is " exercising judicial authority." Proceedings in court when they are not judicial proceedings can only be published with risk. When a judge or a master is hearing an application in chambers, even when the sitting takes place in a building or room officially known as a court, and when a court is sitting *in camera*, the proceedings are not " publicly heard," because the public is not entitled to be present, and it is, therefore, contempt of court to report such proceedings.

What is privileged is a " report " of that which actually takes place in court. It may include all statements made by counsel, judge or witnesses, provided it is shown clearly by whom any statement was made. It must not state as if it were an admitted fact a mere allegation by counsel or by a witness. And it must not include statements that were not made in court. Facts sometimes come to a journalist's knowledge, through conversation with a litigant or his solicitor, which have not been proved in court—facts

which it may or may not be intended to state in court. If they are not subsequently stated in court, they should not be stated in print. If they are mentioned in open court, they may be safely included in a report published afterwards. The following is a matter which requires special care: it happens sometimes that a journalist becomes aware that a defendant has paid a certain sum into court in satisfaction of the plaintiff's claim, and that the plaintiff has not accepted the amount. A rigorous rule forbids mention of such a fact in court till after the verdict of the jury has been given. Earlier mention of it might prejudicially affect the decision of the jury. The fact must, therefore, not be incorporated in any report of a part-heard case. Publication of a report mentioning such a fact before the verdict has been given may be held to amount to contempt of court.

The second restriction, namely, that the report, to be privileged, must be published "contemporaneously" with the proceedings, is equally important. At the time of the trial, the matter is "news," and is presumably published because it is considered to be of interest to the public. Publication at a later date suggests a motive of a more personal character; and a jury may, in such a case, not unreasonably infer "malice."

What is "contemporaneous publication"? The expression cannot be construed literally. Apparently it means, for the purposes of the Act, publication in the next issue of the newspaper going to press after the hearing of the judicial proceedings, or, at all events, in a number issued soon after the hearing.

Under the Children Act, 1908 (8 Edw. VII, c. 67), the duly accredited representatives of newspapers or of news agencies are entitled to remain in court after the general public have been requested to leave while a child or young person is giving evidence in relation to an alleged offence against public decency. In all other cases, the right to report is subject to the right of the court to exclude the public (including reporters) for certain reasons.

Reports of Coroners' Inquests.

The business of the coroner is, with the aid of a jury, to endeavour to ascertain the cause of a death which has not been satisfactorily certified in the usual way, to certify the result of the inquiry and to see that that result is communicated to the Registrar of Deaths. He is not engaged in trying a charge against anybody; he does not sentence anybody or deliver judgment as an ordinary judge does. His utmost power is to issue a warrant for the arrest of a person whom the evidence points to as having probably caused the death: he does not try that person.

A coroner's inquest does not stand on quite the same footing as a trial in court. A coroner does not necessarily conduct his inquiry in a building technically termed a court, though in many of the large towns the municipal authorities have, as a matter of convenience, provided such buildings and named them "Coroners' Courts." The practice of admitting the public, including representatives of the Press, is very old established; but no express right has been conferred by statute upon either the public or the Press to be present at a coroner's inquest. It seems, however, to be incontestable that the proceedings are open to the public. At the same time, the coroner has absolute discretion to exclude the public or any individuals, and his exercise of that discretion is final and cannot be overruled by any superior authority. All this amounts to, so far as the Press is concerned, is that reporters are entitled to be present until they are excluded, and that if they wish to remain they must submit to such conditions as the coroner chooses to impose.

The reasons for the very large discretion accorded to coroners are not difficult to understand. The circumstances that preceded the death of a particular individual do not necessarily concern anybody but the members of his family. The publicity of print might cause them great pain without serving any real public purpose. Or the facts elicited in the course of the inquiry may be such that, in the public interest, it is not desirable to make them known.

Meetings of Local Authorities to which the Press has Right of Access.

By the Local Authorities (Admission of the Press to Meetings) Act, 1908 (8 Edw. VII, c. 43), which removed many doubts on the subject, an express right is conferred upon all—

> " duly accredited representatives of newspapers and duly accredited representatives of news agencies which systematically carry on the business of selling and supplying reports and information to newspapers,"

to admission to meetings of certain specified bodies. The right, however, is subject to a power reserved by the Act to every one of those bodies to exclude all Press representatives temporarily from their meetings

> " as often as may be desirable at any meeting when, in the opinion of a majority of the members of the local authority present . . . expressed by resolution in view of the special nature of the business then being dealt with or about to be dealt with, such exclusion is desirable in the public interest."

The meetings to which the Act applies are those of—

(1) County Councils, County Borough Councils, Borough Councils, Urban District Councils, Rural District Councils, Parish Councils, a Joint Committee or Joint Board of any two or more of such Councils to which any of the powers or duties of the appointing Councils have been transferred or delegated under any Act of Parliament or Provisional Order ;

(2) Parish Meetings held under the Local Government Acts ;

(3) Education Committees (including Joint Education Committees) so far as respects any acts or proceedings *not* required to be submitted to any Council for its approval ;

(4) Boards of Guardians, and any Joint Committee constituted under the Poor Law Acts ; and Boards of Management of a school or asylum district formed under those Acts ;

(5) Any Central Body or Distress Committee under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905 ;

(6) The Metropolitan Water Board, and any Joint Water Board constituted under any Act of Parliament or Provisional Order ;

(7) Any other local body which has or may hereafter have conferred upon it the power to make a rate.

When "Fair and Accurate" Reports are Protected.

Reports that are "fair and accurate" are protected under a provision in the Law of Libel Amendment Act, 1888 ; but the protection is carefully restricted ; and it is important for journalists to bear in mind the exact language of the statute.

"A fair and accurate report"

—so runs the Act—

"published in any newspaper of the proceedings of a public meeting or (except where neither the public nor any newspaper reporter is admitted) of any meeting of a vestry, town council, school board, board of guardians, board or local authority formed or constituted under the provisions of any Act of Parliament, or of any committee appointed by any of the above-mentioned bodies, or of any meeting of any Commissioners authorised to act by Letters Patent, Act of Parliament, Warrant under the Royal Sign Manual, or other lawful warrant or authority, Select Committees of either of the Houses of Parliament, Justices of the Peace in Quarter Sessions assembled for administrative or deliberative purposes . . . shall be privileged unless it shall be proved that such report or publication was published or made maliciously."

The protection, however, does not extend to the publication of matter that is "not of public concern and the publication of which is not for the public benefit." And it will be lost in cases where a report that comes within the four corners of the section quoted, reflects upon the character or conduct of an individual, and he addresses to the newspaper publishing it "a reasonable letter or statement" in the nature of a

correction, contradiction, or explanation, and the letter or statement is not published.

Where the published report purports to be an account of the proceedings of a public meeting, in order to enjoy the protection of the Act, the meeting must be one which falls within the following definition contained in the Act—

> "Any meeting *bonâ fide* and lawfully held for a lawful purpose and for the furtherance or discussion of any matter of public concern, whether the admission thereto be general or restricted."

Defamatory Statements.

Any statement, whether published in the news columns, the correspondence columns, or the advertising columns of a newspaper, which is so worded as to be, in the opinion of a jury, calculated to expose the person named or referred to, to ridicule, hatred, or contempt, or to convey a serious imputation against his integrity, or to injure him in his profession, trade, business, or occupation, is a defamatory statement. Unless the occasion of its publication is clearly privileged, or lawful justification or excuse can be shown for publication of it, it is libellous, and its publication involves liability for pecuniary damages.

To take it out of this category, it must be proved—

First, that the statement is true ;

Secondly, that publication of it *at the particular time* at which publication took place was a matter of public interest ; and

Thirdly, that publication was *bonâ fide*, without malice, and for the protection or otherwise for the benefit of the public.

Fair and accurate reports of statements made in the course of proceedings in Parliament or in the Law Courts are privileged, even when the statements are injurious to individuals, so long as they are made at the time and as a matter of news. If they are published or re-published at a later date, it may be inferred that there was some other motive for publication

than that of supplying the public with information as to the doings of Parliament or the Law Courts.

Publication of Police and other Official Notices.

An important provision for the protection of newspapers is contained in Section 4 of the Law of Libel Amendment Act, 1888, in the form of a stipulation that—

> "The publication at the request of any Government office or department, Officer of State, Commissioner of Police, or Chief Constable, of any notice or report issued by them for the information of the public shall be privileged, unless it shall be proved that such report or publication was published or made maliciously."

It will be noticed that the privilege is carefully restricted to notices or reports issued by Government offices or departments, Officers of State, a Commissioner of Police, or a Chief Constable, and published *at their request.* No privilege is accorded where there has been no such request; and information published at the request of mayors, magistrates, justices of the peace, boards of guardians, county councils, and similar bodies is *not* privileged.

The privilege granted by the section may be lost in three instances: (1) when the publication of the information can be shown to have been "malicious"; (2) when a person aggrieved by the publication has requested the insertion in the newspaper of a "reasonable letter or statement by way of contradiction or explanation," and his letter or statement has been refused insertion; and (3) when the matter published is "not of public concern" and is "not for the public benefit." It will be seen that the exercise of considerable editorial discretion is indispensable.

CHAPTER III

COMMENTS AND CONTEMPT OF COURT

Fair comment on all matters of public interest and on the conduct of all persons whose conduct is brought prominently before or at the moment concerns the general public, is legitimate. The right to comment implies the right to criticise and to condemn, and to do so, on proper occasions, with some severity. In giving judgment in an action which came before him in 1886, Lord Herschell laid down a sound general rule on the subject. He said: "No doubt the public acts of a public man can be made the subject of fair comment or criticism not only by the Press, but by all members of the public; *but the distinction cannot be too clearly borne in mind between comment or criticism and allegations of fact,* such as that disgraceful acts have been committed or discreditable language used. It is one thing to comment upon or criticise even with severity, the acknowledged or proved acts of a public man, and quite another to assert that he has been guilty of a particular act of misconduct."

These words indicate the chief characteristics which differentiate fair criticism from libel. The line is sometimes difficult to draw. The points to be borne in mind are that, in order that statements, however strong or severe, may not exceed the limits of fair comment—

(1) They must consist of comments only (mere assertions of facts are not comments);

(2) The matter commented on must be of public interest;

(3) The comment must be fair and honest.

Any person who, by addressing the public, taking any action in relation to public proceedings, publishing a book, exhibiting a picture, staging a play, or otherwise, challenges public criticism, and is not entitled to complain of any criticism that is

forthcoming, however severe or condemnatory it may be, provided it is fair and honest criticism, *bonâ fide* published in the public interest.

Where the criticism or comment rests on alleged facts, care must be taken to ascertain that the supposed facts really occurred. In the words of Mr. Justice Avory, in summing up in the case of *Kemp* v. *Yexley* (*The Times*, 26th May, 1914): "The comment must be founded on facts that were undisputed—that is to say, facts which were stated must not be mis-stated, and material facts must not be omitted. If either of these conditions were not fulfilled, the plea of fair comment would not succeed . . . Further, what was said must not be expressed in intemperate or exaggerated language that was out of all proportion to the matter dealt with."

Criticisms of Judges, Magistrates, etc.

Judges, magistrates, and all other persons who exercise judicial authority are subject to the same liability to criticism that exists as regards public men generally. Every subject is entitled to hold and to say that a particular decision of a judge or of a magistrate was wrong, or that a sentence inflicted by either was unreasonably harsh or severe, if he genuinely thinks so; and such a statement may be published in a newspaper. Fair—even though severe—comment on the manner in which a judge or a magistrate exercises his powers is not actionable. But the criticism will cease to be fair if base, sordid, or unworthy motives are attributed merely from suspicion, and without there being any ascertained and provable facts to justify the charge. In such a case, the statements will be actionable.

Similar considerations apply to criticisms or comments on the manner in which public worship is conducted by a clergyman, the public actions or the speeches of a public man, or the policy advocated by him, and the conduct or the words of a representative in Parliament so far as the comments are based on a fair and accurate report.

Contempt of Court.

Contempt of court is an offence hardly capable of very precise definition. Anything which, in the opinion of a judge, tends or is likely to bring a court or a judge into contempt or to obstruct or interfere with the proper administration of justice, or the carrying through of the prescribed process of the court, may be held to constitute "contempt of court" and to be punishable accordingly.

The offence may obviously take many specific forms. But the following publications have been held to amount to "contempt"—

(*a*) Articles or comments on legal proceedings—civil or criminal—pending at the time of publication;

(*b*) Copies of the pleadings or of the evidence to be given in proceedings not yet tried;

(*c*) Reports of proceedings directed to be held in private, including proceedings before a judge or a master "in Chambers"; and comments on such proceedings (though it seems that it is not contempt merely to mention the result of the proceedings);

(*d*) Comments on proceedings in which a jury has disagreed and in which, therefore, there is likely to be another trial;

(*e*) Comments or other matter likely to deter a witness from giving evidence, to prejudice the minds of jurors, or to create prejudice against any person a party to the proceedings;

(*f*) Reports or comments which misrepresent the proceedings;

(*g*) In criminal matters, comments on a charge after a magisterial inquiry resulting in a committal for trial and before the trial has taken place.

It is *not* contempt of court to report the proceedings at an inquiry before a magistrate where the inquiry takes place in an open court to which the public is admitted; or the proceedings at a coroner's inquest. It is not contempt of court to publish in the advertising columns or elsewhere

a *bonâ fide* advertisement inviting persons able to give evidence in a pending case to communicate to a specified person or address, or offering a reward for any such evidence.

"Trial by Newspaper."

The offence somewhat loosely described as "trial by newspaper" is contempt of court. It has been frequently denounced from the Bench, and it has been punished, sometimes by fine, sometimes by imprisonment. There are not wanting indications that the judges are likely in future to impose severer punishments than hitherto. "The constitution of the country," said Mr. Justice Darling in 1914, "has provided tribunals with which the country is satisfied, for the elucidation of truth and for the judging of those who are accused. It is not necessary that newspapers should take upon themselves the trial of cases which are to be tried by persons whose duty it is to try them and who have experience for the task. There is no public advantage in newspapers usurping the powers and attempting to discharge the duties of the justiciary."

Strictly speaking, newspapers do not attempt to discharge any of the functions of the justiciary; they make known information that comes into their possession bearing on cases that are to be tried. To what extent is this course legitimate? At what point does it become illegitimate?

To announce that an action has been commenced by one person against another; to mention the nature of the claim; to state when and where the trial will take place; to give similar information as to a pending criminal prosecution: is not contempt of court. The statements are mere news-items, which, presumably, will only be published when they are believed to be of general public interest. Care must be taken not to frame the statements in such a way as to suggest to the reader that the person against whom the civil action has been commenced is undoubtedly in the wrong, or that the person against whom criminal proceedings are contemplated or are pending is guilty; or in such a way as to be

prejudicial to any of the parties concerned. The possibilities of a libel action are not to be overlooked. And in this connection, the aid of that somewhat overworked word " alleged " is not to be despised.

Where civil proceedings are involved, the only safe course is neither to publish the allegations of either party before they have been made in court at the trial, nor to comment on the case till after the trial has been completed and the verdict announced. In particular, information supplied by or on behalf of one of the litigants should not be published. The informant may genuinely believe it to be accurate and unimpeachable : under cross-examination in court it may break down completely. It cannot be claimed that it is a matter of urgent public interest that the facts to be brought out in a civil action should be made known before they have been properly sifted in court. And, obviously, previous publication may prejudice the trial.

Criminal proceedings sometimes involve other considerations ; and there are occasions upon which the temptation to overstep the boundary is very strong. A serious crime comes to light which excites public feeling. The circumstances are obscure or mysterious. Journalists are dispatched immediately to ascertain the facts. The fullest information that can be obtained is given to the public as quickly as possible. There is risk of inculpating, or, at all events, of suggesting the guilt of, an innocent person. But, apart from that, until proceedings have been commenced, cautiously framed statements on what is a matter of undoubted public interest at the moment are probably quite legitimate. Rumours and unauthenticated statements should not be presented as facts ; and the practice of getting persons to make statutory declarations, and of publishing these with the object of giving to one-sided statements a quasi-judicial appearance, should be scrupulously avoided.

Immediately a public investigation is commenced or some person is charged at a police court with the commission of the offence, the newspaper should confine itself to reporting

the actual proceedings. Witnesses, or possible witnesses, should not be interviewed; no statements not yet made in court should be published; and no comments should be made till the trial has been completed. It is these things that are objected to as "trial by newspaper."

When a jury disagrees, the same reticence should be observed. The disagreement of a jury means that the trial is to take place again; the case is still *sub judice*. The only source through which fresh evidence can be legitimately made known is the court; and the only time at which it can be legitimately made known is after it has been given in court.

Advertisements.

It has already been pointed out that advertisements inviting communications from persons able to give evidence in a particular case are legitimate. But an advertisement may be so worded as to amount to "contempt of court." The publication in an advertisement of statements or insinuations against the credit or reputation of a party to any pending proceedings involves liability to the same penalties for contempt as are incurred by comments in the body of the paper.

Advertisements for Lost Property.

The Larceny Act, 1861 (24 & 25 Vic. c. 96), imposes a penalty of £50 on every person who "publicly advertises" a reward for the return of "any property whatsoever," which has been stolen or lost, and who, in the advertisement, uses "any words purporting that no questions will be asked," or that a reward will be "given or paid" for any property which has been stolen or lost "without seizing or making any inquiry after the person producing such property." The Act imposes a similar penalty in respect of any advertisement of stolen or lost goods which contains a "promise or offer" to return to any pawnbroker or other person who may have bought or advanced money by way of loan upon the

stolen or lost property, the money so paid or advanced, *or any other sum of money or reward* for the return of the stolen or lost property.

Both stipulations apply not only to the advertiser, but also to every person who prints or publishes the advertisement.

A subsequent Act (The Larceny Amendment Act, 1870, 33 & 34 Vic. c. 65), limits the right to recover from a printer or publisher of a newspaper penalties for publishing such advertisements to a period of six months after the date of the offence, and makes it necessary, in any case, to obtain the written assent of the Attorney-General or the Solicitor-General to any action for recovery of such penalties.

Official Secrets.

The Official Secrets Act, 1889 (52 & 53 Vic. c. 52), imposes heavy penalties upon persons who commit a variety of offences enumerated in the Act. Among these, the principal offences that concern Pressmen are—

(1) Obtaining any document, sketch, plan, or model, or knowledge of anything which the offender is not entitled to obtain;

(2) Communicating or attempting to communicate it to any person to whom it ought not, "in the interests of the State," to be communicated *at that time;*

(3) Inciting or attempting to procure another person to commit an offence under the Act.

No absolute rule can be laid down as to what comes within the prohibition. While it is generally quite legitimate to publish information officially communicated to the Press by persons in the employ of the Crown or of other public authorities, there is a risk in publishing information received surreptitiously from any such person which came into his possession officially and confidentially by reason of his official position, and where the information can only reach the public as the result of a breach of duty on his part—especially when publicity may be contrary to "the interests of the State." To incite, by the offer of payment or

otherwise, any person to obtain or to communicate such information, is equally an offence.

News in War Time.

In time of war the ordinary rights of the journalist in relation to the collection and publication of news undergo considerable restriction. Concerning the movements of troops, the disposition of the fleet, military and naval preparations, and information generally which is deemed likely to be helpful to the enemy, strict secrecy is nowadays enforced. It is customary for Parliament to grant extensive powers to the Executive in this respect. In the event of an outbreak of hostilities, the journalist should, therefore, make himself acquainted with the precise provisions of any emergency legislation that may be passed, and with the terms of any Order in Council issued in pursuance of such legislation, and with all regulations that may be made from time to time by any Press Bureau, Censor, or other authority temporarily invested with power to forbid, to delay, or to control the publication of information of any specific character. He may find it necessary to submit to a Censor before publishing them articles or paragraphs relating directly or indirectly to the war ; and as severe penalties may attach to a disregard of such a requirement, he should be scrupulously careful to keep himself well informed as to the regulations on the subject.

CHAPTER IV

QUESTIONS OF COPYRIGHT

Reports of Political Speeches, Lectures, etc.

THE Copyright Act, 1911 (1 & 2 George V, c. 46), expressly declares that it is not to be an infringement of copyright in "an address of a political nature delivered at a public meeting" to publish a report of it in a newspaper; and it contains a similar provision with regard to "lectures delivered in public," except where a report of the lecture is prohibited by conspicuous notices affixed "at or about the main entrance" to the building and in a position "near the lecturer." Any speech or address is for this purpose to be regarded as a lecture. The provision extends to sermons, but in their case the notice need only be "at or near the main entrance" of the building in which the sermon is delivered. Lectures or sermons, the publication of which is in this formal manner prohibited, must not be reported.

Copyright in Reports, Articles, etc.

Reports, verbatim or otherwise, supplied to a newspaper by a reporter who is engaged as a salaried servant of the proprietor of the paper, or who is serving such proprietor as an apprentice, become the property of the employer, and the copyright of every report so supplied vests in him, subject to the restriction that he is not at liberty to publish it in separate form (*i.e.*, otherwise than as part of a newspaper) without the consent of the author.

The same principle applies whether the employer is an individual, a firm, a news agency, or a joint stock company.

It applies also to news items and to articles supplied in the course of his employment by a person in the service of any such employer, whether his remuneration takes the form of a fixed salary or of payment according to a stipulated scale for "copy" used.

The respective rights of employer or employee may, of course, be extended or limited by written agreement between them.

Simultaneous Reports Voluntarily Contributed.

There do not seem to have been any legal decisions determining the question in whom the copyright vests of news items sent in simultaneously and in identical terms by an outside contributor to several newspapers and paid for and published by two or more of them ; and the Copyright Act, 1911, does not deal with the point. The practice is well known and has long been recognised ; and it would seem that each newspaper which pays for and uses such a news item has a limited copyright in it (*i.e.*, a right to restrain other persons from copying it from its pages, but not a right to restrain others from using it who have acquired the matter direct from the author).

Identical Reports, etc., Supplied by News Agencies.

News items, reports, articles, paragraphs, and other matter supplied by a news agency to a large number of newspapers are usually so supplied on conditions which make it clear that the only right which is to pass is the right to use the matter so supplied for the current or an early issue of the newspaper. Presumably, however, the proprietor of a newspaper taking and using such matter would be entitled to prevent any person from actually copying it from his columns. But he could not infer from its mere presence in another newspaper that it had been copied from his columns. Evidence of the fact would be necessary.

The same conditions apply to "serial rights" in stories, which are arranged for almost invariably on conditions which reserve the copyright in the author or his assignee.

Copying from other Newspapers.

There is no legal right, apart from a specific agreement between the parties concerned, for one newspaper to copy

articles or parts of articles, news items or reports from any other newspaper; and the courts have refused to recognise any custom to do so. The owner of the copyright is entitled to restrain all such copying, even when the source is acknowledged.

This is subject to the right in commenting upon any incident, or criticising or calling attention to any argument or expression of opinion in another newspaper, periodical, or book, to make fair and reasonable quotations. But even this use of the work of others must be *bonâ fide*, and the quotations must be limited. A few introductory or supplemental comments will not entitle one newspaper to set out the whole or the bulk of an article taken, without consent, from another newspaper.

Extracts from Books, etc.

The Copyright Act, 1911, expressly declares that "any fair dealing with any work for the purpose of criticism, review, or newspaper summary" is not an infringement of an author's copyright. Quotations at such length as to make it unnecessary for a reader to buy the book "reviewed" will not be held to be "fair dealing."

Copyright in News.

It is sometimes said that there is no copyright in news. In a strict sense, this is true: there is no copyright in an incident, an occurrence, an event. But there is copyright in the form in which an incident, an occurrence, or an event is described in words. It is the particular statement to which copyright attaches. The facts may be otherwise stated without infringement of copyright.

Even a list of names, for instance, a list of registered bills of sale, or any other compilation, is protected where it is the result of the labour of the person claiming protection, or of one of his paid servants, or has been acquired by him by payment. Copyright attaches to it because it is an original literary product.

Reports of cricket and other matches, and of races, etc., are in the same category. Even a cricket score obtained by a reporter in the course of his duties, and telegraphed by him to his newspaper, is protected. Anybody else who obtains the same figures by personal inquiry can publish them; but he is not entitled to copy them from another newspaper.

CHAPTER V

EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Disclosure of Contributor's Name.

It has been held that where an action for libel is brought against the proprietor or editor of a newspaper, and he admits the publication of the words complained of, he cannot be compelled to disclose the name of the writer, unless it can be shown that the identity of the writer is a fact material to some issue raised in the particular case before the court. In most instances, the question is irrelevant. The leading case on the point is that of *Hennessy* v. *Wright*, which came before the Court of Appeal in 1888. In giving judgment, Lord Esher made it clear that, in the opinion of the court, the sole question was whether the comments complained of were fair. "How can it be said," asked His Lordship, "to depend upon the name of the persons who gave the information, or whether they were acting maliciously? How can the names of the informants be important or in any way effective upon the question whether the defendant's comments are fair? I cannot see how the knowledge of those names would aid in solving that question. As to the question whether the report is correct, how can the names of informants affect the matter?"

The decision has been followed in all similar cases since. Disclosure has been refused, and the refusal has been upheld by the courts where the information sought was the name of the writer of either an article, a news-item, a report, or a letter from a correspondent using a *nom de plume*.

Apart from legal proceedings or a threat of legal proceedings, a newspaper proprietor or editor should not disclose to third persons the names of contributors or correspondents without the express consent of the latter. The submission of an article or a letter without the actual name

of the writer attached to it implies a condition that the name is not to be divulged.

Contributor's Right to "Nom de plume."

In the case of *Landa* v. *Greenberg* (heard in 1908), Mr. Justice Eve said that a *nom de plume* used by a writer is part of his stock-in-trade, and that he is entitled to an injunction to restrain others from using it. The plaintiff had been in the defendant's service, and had contributed articles to the defendant's newspaper, signing them with a *nom de plume*. After she left his service her *nom de plume* was, without her authority, attached to articles written by another person and published in the same newspaper. This practice the court declared to be wrong.

Contributors' MSS.

The rarity of litigation with regard to authors' MSS. is surprising. Where contributions from persons not engaged on the staff of a newspaper are expressly invited, special conditions are usually attached to the invitation. By submitting a MS. in response to such an invitation, a contributor will be taken to intimate that he accepts the conditions; and the precise terms of the invitation will be binding upon both parties.

Apart from any stipulation to the contrary, the duty of a newspaper proprietor or editor in relation to MSS. sent in response to his invitation is, apparently, to take as much care of them as a reasonably prudent man would take of property of his own. So long as he does this, he will apparently not be responsible for their accidental loss or destruction. While a MS. remains in existence, he must return it to its author on demand. He has no right to retain it against the wish of the author.

But if one of the conditions upon which the MS. was sent in is that, even if unused, it will not in any case be returned, there seems no ground for holding that the author is entitled to insist on its return. The only event in which he could

possibly succeed would be where he was able to prove conclusively that the MS. was actually in the possession of the newspaper proprietor or editor at the time when its return was requested; but it is by no means certain that, even in that case, his right would be upheld. He parted with his property on a condition that he should not require it to be restored to him.

It is an old-established and well-known custom of newspaper offices that news items which have been sent in as "linage" contributions, and which have not been used, are neither returned nor acknowledged. All such contributions must be taken to have been sent in subject to that condition; and there does not seem to be any ground on which a claim for their return could be sustained.

How long is an editor entitled to retain a MS. which has not been paid for before using it or deciding whether he will or will not use it? In the absence of any agreement on the point, it does not appear that any limit of time can be imposed. But the author, if he considers that there has been undue delay, can withdraw his permission for the use of his MS., and can demand and insist upon its immediate return.

Unsolicited Contributions.

Authors who send in unsolicited MSS. do so at their own risk. Before dispatching a MS., they should ascertain whether the paper to which they propose submitting it contains any announcement as to the conditions on which such MSS. will be received or returned; and, where there is an announcement on the subject, they should scrutinise its terms with care. It will seldom be found to be so ferociously uncompromising as the couplet that used to appear in *Punch*—

> Uninvited contributions *Punch* never returns;
> In summer he tears them, in winter he burns.

But usually there is a more or less polite disclaimer of all responsibility.

As a rule, the receipt of an unsolicited literary contribution imposes no duty of any kind on the publisher or editor

to whom it is addressed. There is no obligation to preserve it or to take any care of it, and no responsibility attaches by reason of its being destroyed, lost, or mislaid. Even where a theatrical manager asked a dramatic author to send him a synopsis of a play which the latter had written, and the author, instead of sending a synopsis, sent his MS. of the entire play, and the MS. was lost, it was held that no responsibility attached to the theatrical manager. The ground for the decision was that what had been sent to the theatrical manager was something that he had not asked for. No duty of any kind was imposed upon him in relation to a thing that he had not ordered.

It would appear, however, that so long as a MS. (although unsolicited) is actually in the possession of a person to whom it has been sent, he is bound to return it to the author on demand. It does not appear that he is under any obligation to pay postage or carriage, or to incur any other expense in connection with its return. Although, where a stamped-addressed envelope accompanies the MS., the author may almost invariably rely on receiving it back if not used, it is doubtful whether return by post can be insisted upon. Dickens's practice was to announce that a specified MS. would not be used, and that the author could fetch it away from the office ; and it would probably be held that it is the duty of the author to call for it or to send some other person to call for it on his behalf.

A newspaper proprietor is not entitled, without first obtaining the author's consent, to use an unsolicited contribution for any purpose other than that indicated by the author. Such a contribution addressed to the editor of a specific newspaper is obviously submitted with a view to its insertion in that newspaper, and not in any other ; and the mere fact that it was not ordered or invited does not authorise its use in any other way. So long as it remains in existence it is the author's property although he has chosen to let it pass out of his possession into that of another person who is not responsible for its safety.

Altering an Author's MS.

The relative rights of author and editor or publishers depend on the express terms of the contract between them. In the absence of any arrangement to the contrary, the following rules would seem to be applicable, viz.—

1. Where an article is to be published either in the name of an author or in such a way that the readers will understand the identity of the writer, no material alterations may be made in it without his consent. In particular, there must not be any alterations which would have the effect of misrepresenting his opinions, bringing discredit upon him, or injuring his reputation. The fact that the copyright of the article has been bought outright, and has been paid for, makes no difference in this respect.

2. Where the article has been supplied on such terms that the publisher is to be entitled to publish it as his own or to deal with as if he had written it, and it is not to be published in the name of the author or in such a way as to suggest that he is in any manner responsible for it, the publisher or his editor is at liberty to alter it to any extent he pleases.

POST OFFICE CODE OF LONGHAND ABBREVIATIONS

FOR USE IN PRESS TELEGRAMS

Word	*Abbreviation*
about	abt
accommodation	accomdn
according	accrdg
account	acct
adjourn	adjn
adjourned	adjnd
adjournment	adjmt
Admiralty	Admy
advantage	advtge
advertisement	advt
afternoon	aftn
again	agn
against	agst
agriculture	agric
agricultural	agric
although	altho
among	amng
amongst	amgst
amount	amt
another	anr
anything	anytg
Applause	App
Archbishop	Archbp
Archdeacon	Archdn
association	assn
attendance	attdce
Attorney-General	Atty Genl
attorney	atty
August	Aug
average	avge
bankrupt	bkpt
been	bn
between	btwn
Bishop	Bp
board	bd
building	bldg
Catholic Church	Cath Ch
Chairman	Chrmn
Captain	Capt
Cheers	Chrs
Christian	Xtn
Christianity	Xtnty
Christmas	Xmas
Church of England	Ch o Eng
circumstances	circs
Colonel	Col
commanding	comdg
Committee	Comee
Company	Coy
conference	confce
consequence	conseqce
consideration	considn
considerable	consdrbl
Conservative	Consve
constitution	constn
constitutional	constl
Corporation	Corpn
could	cd
Council	Cncl
Court (*when name of* Court *precedes or follows*)	Ct
cricket	ckt
December	Dec
defendant	deft
demonstration	demonstn
department	dept
difference	diffce
different	diffrnt
difficult	diffclt
difficulty	diffy
disestablishment	disestabt
Editor	Edr
edition	edn
England	Engld
entered	entd
especially	especly
establishment	estabt
evening	evg

Word	*Abbreviation*
every	evry
everything	evrytg
examination	examn
exceedingly	excdgly
exchange	exchge
extraordinary	xtrdny
(*The prefix* ex *may often be written* x)	
favourable	favrble
February	Feb
football	ftball
for	f
foreign	fgn
forward	forwd
frequent	freqt
frequently	freqtly
Friday	Fri
from	fm
General	Genl
generally	genly
gentleman	gentn
gentlemen	genten
Government	Govt
great	gt
had	hd
handicap	hcap
have	h
having	hvg
hear, hear	h h
His Majesty's (*ship, etc.*)	HM
Hon. Member	Hon Mbr
honorary	hony
hours	hrs
House of Commons	H o Coms
House of Lords	H o Lds
hundred	hund
immediate	immdte
immediately	immdly
importance	imptce
important	impt
improvement	impvt
independent	indpt
independence	indpce
industrial	industl
inspector	inspr
insurance	insce
international	internatl
Ireland	Ireld
January	Jan

Word	*Abbreviation*
knowledge	knwldge
labour	labr
Laughter	Lftr
Leader	Ldr
Liberal	Lbl
Lieutenant	Lieut
Limited	Ltd
Lord	Ld
Lordship	Ldshp
Loud Cheers	Ld Chrs
manufacturer	manufr
manufacturing	manufactg
March	Mar
market	mkt
matter	mtr
meeting	mtg
might	mt
military	mily
Ministerial Cheers	Min Chrs
miscellaneous	miscl
Monday	Mon
morning	mng
near	nr
necessary	necessy
nevertheless	ntheless
Nonconformist	Nonconfst
notwithstanding	notwstg
November	Nov
number	nbr
objection	objn
o'clock	o'c *or* ock
October	Oct
of	o
official	offl
opinion	opn
opportunity	oppy
Opposition Cheers	Oppn Chrs
ordinary	ordy
other	othr
paid	pd
Parliament	Parlt
Parliamentary	Parlty
particular	prtclr
perhaps	praps
performance	perfmce
personal	prsnl
plaintiff	pltff
preferred	prefd
preference	prefce

Word	*Abbreviation*
preliminary	prelimy
President	Presdt
Professor	Profr
proprietor	propr
query	qy
question	quesn
railway	rly
received	recd
recommendation	recomdn
reference	refce
registered	regd
Right Hon. Gentleman	Rt Hon Gentn
Roman Catholic	Rom Cath
said	sd
satisfaction	satisfn
satisfactory	satisfty
Saturday	Saty
Scotland	Scotd
second	secd
Secretary	Secy
September	Sept
Sergeant	Sgt
several	sevl
shall	shl
shipbuilding	shipbdg
should	shd
society	socy
solicitor	solr
special	spl

Word	*Abbreviation*
steeplechase	schase
that	(*punched*) tt
that	(*written*) t
the	(*punched*) t
the	(*written*) /
there—their	thr
therefore	thrfr
Thursday	Thurs
though	tho
thought	thot
temperance	tempce
temporary	tempy
thousand	thsd
through	thro
together	togr
Tuesday	Tues
University	Univy
very	vy
voluntary	voly
was	ws
Wednesday	Wedy
were	wr
wicket	wkt
which	wh
will	wl
with	w
working	wkg
would	wd
yesterday	yesty
your	yr

TERMINATIONS

Word	*Abbreviation as in*
ary *as* y	reactiony
ever *as* vr	howvr
ial *as* l	substantl
ual *as* l	individl
ion *as* n	positn
ional *as* nl	professnl

Word	*Abbreviation as in*
ing *as* g	breakg
ings *as* gs	proceedgs
ment *as* mt	punishmt
fully *as* fly	wonderfly
ought *as* ot	brot, thot

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTRACTIONS

COUNTIES

Word	*Abbreviation*
Bedfordshire	Beds
Berkshire	Berks
Buckinghamshire	Bucks
Cumberland	Cumbd

Word	*Abbreviation*
Derbyshire	Dbysh
Gloucestershire	Glostersh
Hampshire	Hants
Lancashire	Lancsh

Counties—(*continued*)

Word	*Abbreviation*
Leicestershire	Lestersh
Lincolnshire	Lincnshr
Nottinghamshire	Notts
Northumberland	Northd
Northamptonshire (Northants *is objectionable as liable to be translated* North Hampshire).	Northamptnsh
Wiltshire	Wilts
Yorkshire (Yorks *has been found in practice not sufficiently distinctive from* York.)	Yorksh

TOWNS

Word	*Abbreviation*
Aberdeen	Abdeen
Belfast	Blfst
Birmingham	Bham
Bradford	Bradfd
Doncaster	Doncr
Dublin	Dbln
Edinburgh	Edinbro
Gloucester	Gloster
Hereford	Herefd
Huddersfield	Hudfd
Leicester	Lester
Liverpool	Lpool
Manchester	Manchr
Middlesbrough	Middlsbro
Newcastle	Ncstle
Northampton	Nthmptn
Nottingham	Nottm
Sheffield	Sheffd
Southampton (So'tn, *sometimes used by telegraphists, is objectionable.*)	Sthmptn
Stafford	Staffd
Wakefield	Wakefd
Winchester	Winchr
Wolverhampton (*In all towns ending with* ton *the* o *may be omitted, as* Darlingtn.)	Wolvmptn

NOTE

In issuing this list for use in Press Telegrams the Secretary of the Post Office wrote: "The Postmaster-General hopes that a useful purpose will be served in the uniform adoption of the list by reporters as a standard code. . . . It has been compiled in consultation with the Press Association, the Exchange Telegraph Company, the Central News, Messrs. Ashley and Smith, the Institute of Journalists, the National Union of Journalists, and the Incorporated Phonographic Society. . . It is understood, of course, that there will be no attempt on the part of the Post Office to impose this list in any limiting or restrictive sense on reporters and others handing in copy for transmission."

(The Longhand Press Contractions which previously formed the standard for journalistic use, consisted of the list adopted by a Committee of the First International Shorthand Congress of 1887.)

POST OFFICE REGULATIONS FOR PRESS TELEGRAMS

PRESS Message Regulations are issued from time to time by the Postmaster-General, after they have received the sanction of Parliament. They are embodied in a Public Circular entitled "Press Messages," a comprehensive document needing the careful attention of every journalist sending copy over the wires, who is recommended to obtain the latest issue from the Secretary, General Post Office, London. We quote below some of the more important regulations—

CHARGES

The rates for the transmission of press messages are as follows—

1s. for every 100 words, or fraction of 100 words, between 6 p.m. and 9 a.m.; and 1s. for every 75 words, or fraction of 75 words, between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

When a message is sent to more than one address, 2d. for every 100 or 75 words, as the case may be, sent to each additional address.

The addresses need not be in the same town.

A message, if handed in at 9 a.m. precisely, will be charged at the day rate, and if handed in at 6 p.m. precisely, at the night rate.

The names and addresses of the senders and addresses of press telegrams are not counted or charged for.

Figures are counted and charged for at the rate of one word for each figure.

If the receiver of a press message doubts the accuracy of any portion of it, he may have the doubtful portion repeated on depositing the sum of 6d. for each 100 or 75 words, according to the time of night or day at which the application for a repetition is made. In the event of any error having been made in transmission, the money will be refunded.

CONDITIONS

A press message must be addressed to public newspapers or institutions which have been registered at the General Post Office.

It must be addressed to a newspaper at its registered address; if addressed to the editor, publisher, or other member of the staff by name, it will be liable to be charged at the full rate for ordinary messages. It must contain matter solely for publication in the newspaper to which it is addressed.

Telegrams sent to a newspaper, but not intended for immediate publication in that newspaper, are chargeable at the full rate for ordinary messages.

Telegrams sent to newspapers at the press rates must not be exhibited at the newspaper offices for public inspection.

The Postmaster-General will not be liable for any loss or damage which may be incurred or sustained by reason or on account of any mistake or default in the transmission or delivery of a telegram.

What a Press Message may *Not* Contain

A press message may not contain—

(1) Letters to the editor; (2) advertisements; (3) ordinary notices of births and deaths; (4) election addresses; (5) anything not intended for immediate publication in the newspaper, or immediate exhibition in the news room, club, or exchange room, to which it is addressed; (6) anything written in cypher or in a foreign language; (7) anything for the publication of which a money payment is usually made.

When any such matter, or matter of a private nature, or matter not for publication, is included in or added to a press message, such matter will be charged for at the full rate for ordinary messages. For instance, the words "To follow report sent by train," if prefixed to a press message, are chargeable as a separate message at the full rate.

An exception to the foregoing rule is made in the case of the following "instructions," which, being intended for the guidance of the officers of the Department, are permitted to be transmitted free of charge—

"More to follow."—When written at the end of a section of a message which is being handed in in sections.

"Continuation of —— message."—When written at the commencement of a section.

"End of message."—When written at the conclusion of a message.

These words will not be counted with or charged for as a portion of the message.

Prepayment

The charge for the transmission and the charge (if any) for the delivery of a press message must be paid at the time of tender, except in the case of any message to which a pass is attached entitling the message to be accepted for transmission without prepayment.

Passes

Proprietors of newspapers, whether London or provincial, will be provided by the Department with books containing passes for the transmission of press messages without prepayment on the following conditions—

(i) A minimum deposit of 25*l.* to be lodged with the Postmaster-General, to cover the value of the franked messages and as security for the credit given.

(ii) The accounts for the messages sent under the passes—which will be rendered by the Receiver and Accountant General monthly—to be paid within one week of the date on which they are received.

(iii) A charge of 2½ per cent. to be paid on the amount of each account, to meet the expense incurred in keeping an account of the messages sent, and to defray the cost of printing the passes.

(iv) The passes to be used only for the purpose of franking messages addressed to the newspaper, the name of which is printed thereon.

This rule does not apply to the special passes issued to the News Agencies, which frank messages addressed to any newspapers.

Passes which have been defaced or altered in any way will not be accepted.

When one address (or more) in a " multiple-address " message is franked by a pass, and the remaining addresses are paid for in stamps, one of these latter addresses must be paid for at the full day or night rate, as the case may be.

Method of Writing out Press Messages

The pages should be numbered consecutively at the right-hand top corner ; the name of the sender should be written at the top of each page.

Each page should contain about 100 words, and the last word of each page should be repeated at the top of the next.

When more than one reporter is employed on the same message, it should be divided into sections, as A, B, C, etc. ; the section letter and page number should be entered at the top of each sheet, and the words " end of section — " at the bottom of the last sheet of each section.

Attention is specially directed to the necessity of writing as legibly as possible, and it is recommended that whenever practicable the " copy " should be written in ink and not in pencil.

When a message is addressed to more than one town, a sufficient number of copies of the text must be supplied to allow of its being telegraphed simultaneously to each town. Information as to the number required can always be obtained beforehand from the postmaster of the town from which the news is sent.

" Continuous " Messages

The rules with regard to " continuous " messages, *i.e.*, messages which are handed in in several portions, are as follows—

(i) The whole message must relate to one matter (as, for example, a report of a speech or meeting) complete in itself, and must necessarily be printed consecutively in order to render it intelligible.

(ii) It must be sent to one set of addresses.

(iii) No portion of copy tendered for transmission between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. can be counted together with a portion tendered between 6 p.m. and 9 a.m.

(iv) No portion of copy handed in must consist of less than 75 words between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., or of less than 100 words between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 a.m. When any batch contains less than these numbers it is charged for as if containing them.

(v) In the case of reports of speeches the " copy " must be tendered consecutively at intervals sufficiently short to keep the telegraphists fully occupied, but not in less quantities than 75 or 100 words at a time (see par. iv) ; and in the case of other messages the interval between the handing in of the different batches must not be greater than one hour between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 a.m., and half an hour between he hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

(vi) In any case, should the authorised interval be exceeded, a fresh charge will be calculated from the commencement of the portion next following the break.

Notice of Intended Dispatch of Press Messages

At least 24 hours' notice, by letter or paid telegram, should be received by "The Secretary, General Post Office, London," before a press message of a greater length than 200 words is tendered for transmission.

The notice should contain the following particulars—

(1) Name of Office at which the message will be handed in; (2) time of handing in; (3) length; (4) addresses.

In the absence of such notice a press message exceeding 200 words in length cannot be accepted for transmission unless it be considered probable by the postmaster that it can be transmitted in due course without seriously delaying the transmission of ordinary postal telegrams. . . .

(The Circular also gives the regulations as to special arrangements for keeping any telegraph office open after ordinary business hours, with the late fees chargeable for this concession. The regulations for special wires are also furnished.)

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